

CHAPTER 46

AL-AḤQĀF

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This is the seventh and last *Sūra* of the Ḥā Mīm group. Like other *Sūrās* of this group it was revealed at Mecca towards the middle of the Prophet's ministry before Hijra, at a time when opposition to the new Message had become bitter, persistent and organized. Noldeke places the revelation of the *Sūra* immediately after Chapter 7. It seems to resemble its sister *Sūrās* of the Ḥā Mīm group in tone and tenor. The *Sūra* has 36 verses including *Bismillah* and takes its title from v. 22.

The preceding *Sūra* had ended on the solemn declaration that "God is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, His is the Majesty, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." In the present *Sūra* the claim made in these words is justified. The Qur'ān has been revealed by the Wise and Mighty God. God is Wise in the sense that the Quranic teaching is based on sound and solid foundations, and is supported by reason, common-sense and accumulated human experience; and He is Mighty in the sense that by living up to its ideals and principles the Muslims will gain ascendancy and predominance over their opponents. The *Sūra* deals primarily with the subjects of prophethood and Divine revelation, with special reference to the revelation of the Qur'ān, and with Unity of God, and life after death, in regard to which fulfilment of prophecies made in the Qur'ān is adduced as an argument.

Subject-Matter

Like its six predecessors of the Ḥā Mīm group, the *Sūra* opens with the subject of the Quranic revelation and Divine Unity which constitutes its main theme, and gives the following few arguments in refutation of idolatry :

(a) Only that Being can command and demand of us that we should adore and worship Him Who, besides being our Creator and Sustainer, is Almighty and All-Powerful and can therefore compel obedience to His laws and commandments; but the false gods of idolaters are not only not creators but are themselves created. (b) Idolatry finds no support in any revealed Scripture. (c) Human knowledge, reason, and experience repel it and revolt against it. (d) A deity which cannot, and does not, answer our prayer is of no use, and the so-called gods of idolaters not only are incapable of responding to the prayers of their votaries, they are even unconscious of having been called upon by them.

The *Sūra* then proceeds to say that by laying claim to prophethood the Holy Prophet has not brought forward any innovation. Divine Messengers have been appearing at all times and among

all peoples to teach them Unity of God and their duty to their fellow-beings, and the revelation vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet contains the essentials of all those revealed teachings. The *Sūra* further says that the truth of the Quranic revelation is supported not only by the intrinsic worth of its teaching but also by the prophecies which Moses, the greatest Israelite Prophet, centuries ago, had made about it.

The *Sūra* then dismisses as foolish and unfounded the disbelievers' plea which, in their conceit and ignorance, they put forward as an excuse for rejecting the Divine Revelation, viz., "If there had been any good in the revelation presented to us, we, being better informed and better placed in life, would have been the first to accept it." The *Sūra* further says that whereas disbelievers, proud of their great material resources and social status, reject the Divine Message, others who are endowed with faith and spiritual wealth, accept it, and stick to it under the severest trials and tribulations, till they are comforted with the Divine assurance, viz., "no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. These are the fortunate ones from whom God shall accept their good works and overlook their ill deeds."

The *Sūra* then cites the fate of 'Ād — a people who had flourished in the neighbourhood of the Meccans—to show that disbelief never prospers and is sure to come to grief in the long run. The Adites were so completely destroyed that not a vestige of their great and glorious civilization remained behind.

Towards its end the *Sūra* sounds a note of warning to the people of the Holy Prophet. They are told that they should not be misled by their wealth and prosperity and by the poverty and weakness of Muslims, and that if they persisted in rejecting the Divine Message, their present prosperity itself would prove to be their ruin, because rejection of Truth never goes unpunished.

The *Sūra* ends with an exhortation to the Holy Prophet and his followers, calling upon them, as brave votaries of Truth, to bear with patience and fortitude, all the suffering and persecution to which they were being subjected, as the time was fast approaching when the cause of Truth would triumph and their persecutors would stand before them in utter disgrace and humiliation, begging for forgiveness and mercy.

سُورَةُ الْاٰحْقَافِ مَكِّيَّةٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious the Merciful.³⁷⁵⁷

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bHā Mīm.³⁷⁵⁸

حُم ②

3. ^cThe revelation of this Book is from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise.³⁷⁵⁹

تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ③

4. ^dWe have not created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, but with truth, and for an appointed term; but those who disbelieve turn away from that of which they have been warned.³⁷⁶⁰

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَمَّا أُنذِرُوا مُّعْرِضُونَ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b40 : 2 ; 41 : 2 ; 42 : 2 ; 43 : 2 ; 44 : 2 ; 45 : 2. ^c20 : 5 ; 32 : 3 ; 36 : 6 ; 40 : 3 ; 45 : 3. ^d21 : 17 ; 38 : 28 ; 44 : 39.

3757. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

in the seven *Sūrās* of the حم group, as Divine attributes represented by these abbreviated letters indicate.

3758. Commentary :

For general treatment of abbreviated letters see 2 : 2 & 19 : 2. Verses 40 : 2, 42 : 2 & 45 : 2, however, deal particularly with the letters حم which, as in the preceding six Chapters, are placed at the beginning of the present *Sūra*. These letters may be taken as standing for one of the following pairs of Divine attributes, *i.e.*, حميد مجيد (Praiseworthy, and Lord of honour), حي قيوم (Living, Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining), حافظ الكتاب (Guardian of the Book and Revealer of the Book). These Divine attributes, as also others that are represented by these abbreviated letters, have a strong bearing on the subject-matter of the *Sūra*. Unity of God, refutation and denunciation of idolatry, Divine revelation, with special reference to the revelation of the Qur'ān, life after death and the triumph of truth over falsehood are some of the important topics dealt with

3759. Commentary :

The verse signifies that the Message of this Book—the Qur'ān—is bound to succeed as it has been revealed by God Who is Mighty. And because its Revealer is the Wise God, it contains the quintessence of the accumulated wisdom of saints and seers of the past ages and is also the compendium of the imperishable teachings of all revealed Scriptures.

3760. Commentary :

The verse means to say that the creation of heavens and earth is intended to serve an eternal purpose which is to serve man who is, God's noblest handiwork, and the aim and object of whose life is to develop in himself Divine attributes. For the attainment by man of this grand and sublime object, God raised His Messengers in all times and among all peoples.

5. Say, "Do you know what it is you call on besides Allah? Show me what they have created of the earth. Or have they a share in the *creation* of the heavens? Bring me a Book revealed before this or some vestige of knowledge *in your support*, if you indeed speak the truth."³⁷⁶¹

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَا ذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
إِيتُونِي بِكِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ هَذَا أَوْ أَثَرَةٍ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ⑤

6. And who is in greater error than those who, instead of Allah, pray unto such as will not answer them till the Day of Resurrection, and ^bthey are even unaware of their prayer?³⁷⁶²

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَن
لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ وَهُمْ عَن دُعَائِهِمْ
غَفُلُونَ ⑥

^a35 : 41.

^b10 : 30.

To these Messengers He revealed Himself, and to them He gave His teaching. The greatest and noblest of these Divine Messengers was the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, and the last and most complete and perfect code of Divine Laws is the Qur'ān.

The creation of the heavens and the earth also establishes the eternal truth that there is only One Designer, Creator and Controller of the universe. It constitutes an unassailable argument against idolatry.

The words "for an appointed time" signify that the universe had a beginning and will also have an end. It is to this great truth that the verses, "All that is on it will pass away. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour" (55 : 27-28), refer.

3761. Important Words :

أَثَرَة (vestige) is inf. noun from أَثَر and means, a remain or relic of a thing; a trace; sign or mark; vestige or track; a footprint ; impression or mark made by the foot of a man upon the ground (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

With this verse begins a systematic refutation and condemnation of شرك i.e. idolatry.

It means to say that only that Being can command adoration and is fit to be worshipped Who as the Architect and Creator of the universe controls our destinies. But the false gods of idolaters not only have not created anything but are themselves created. They do not even possess any power to harm or benefit themselves, nor have they any power over death, life or Resurrection (25 : 4). Then what title or right have they to man's worship of them? The verse further says that in reality no authority except that of a revealed Scripture can form the basis for determining whether a certain belief is right or wrong. The words "Or some vestige of knowledge in your support" signify that human science and reason as well lend no support to idolatrous beliefs or practices. Thus this little verse embodies three very strong and cogent arguments to repudiate and demolish polytheistic and idolatrous doctrines.

3762. Commentary :

The verse embodies yet another very convincing argument against idol-worship. Islam presents a Living God Who listens to the prayers of His devotees and has given proof of this fact in every age. He reveals Himself to

7. "And when mankind are gathered together, they (false deities) will be enemies to them (their worshippers) and will deny their worship.³⁷⁶³

8. ^bAnd when Our clear Signs are recited unto them, those who disbelieve say of the truth when it comes to them, 'This is manifest sorcery.'

9. Do they say, 'He has forged it'? Say, 'If I have forged it, you cannot avail me aught against Allah. He knows best what *idle* talk you indulge in. Sufficient is He for a Witness between me and you. And He is the Most Forgiving, the Merciful'.³⁷⁶⁴

وَإِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوا لَهُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَكَانُوا
بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ ④

وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ نَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لِلْحَقِّ لَبَاجَاءُ هُمْ هَذَا إِسْحَرُ مُبِينٌ ⑤

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ إِنْ افْتَرَيْتَهُ فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ
لِي مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ ⑥
كَفَى بِهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ ⑦

^a6 : 23 ; 10 : 29. ^b34 : 44 ; 61 : 7. ^c11 : 36.

His true votaries by accepting their prayers and consoles them in hour of distress by speaking to them words of comfort. How encouraging and hope-raising are the Quranic words : "And when My servants ask thee about Me, say, I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me" (2 : 187). Other religions hold out no such promise to their followers. Let them cry hoarse, the Qur'ān says, their false gods will never answer their prayer because they do not possess any *u:h* power. Of what use, then, is that deity which is deaf and dumb and hears and answers not the agonised cries of its votaries?

3763. **Commentary :**

In this verse the votaries of false gods are told that not only will their gods not answer their prayers unto the Day of Resurrection, but will disown them on that awful Day when they (the idolaters) will be made to face

the consequences of their idolatrous beliefs and practices.

3764. **Commentary :**

After effectively refuting *شرك* (idolatry) in the preceding few verses, the *Sūra*, in the present verse, proceeds to deal with the next important topic—Divine revelation. It purports to say that forging lies about God, being a fatal poison, is bound to bring about the spiritual death and destruction of the forger. This is the significance of the words: "You cannot avail me aught against Allah." The words, "Sufficient is He for a witness between me and you," signify that "if I am a forger of lies against God, He would not let me go unpunished, but if you reject the Message of truth, you too will have to suffer the evil consequences of your rejection."

The expression *من الله* means: (a) in opposition to Allah; (b) from the punishment of Allah.

10. Say, 'I am not a novelty among the Messengers, nor do I know what will be done with me or with you *in this life*. "I do but follow what is revealed to me; and I am but a plain Warner."³⁷⁶⁵

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا يُفْعَلُ
بِي وَلَا بِكُمْ إِنَّا نَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا
إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ①

11. Say, 'Tell me, if this is from Allah and you disbelieve therein, and a ^bwitness from among the Children of Israel bears witness to *the advent* of one like him, and he believed, but you are too proud *to believe, how should you fare?*' Verily, Allah guides not the wrong-doing people.³⁷⁶⁶

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ
وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ
فَأَمَّنَ وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ لَا يُهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ②

^a6 : 51 ; 7 : 204 ; 11 : 15 ; 33 : 3. ^b11 : 18 ; 61 : 7.

3765. Important Words :

بدعاً (new) is derived from بدع which means, he originated a thing or brought it into existence for the first time, the thing not having existed before, and not after the similitude of anything pre-existing. They say فلان بدع في هذا الامر i.e., such a one is the first person to do this thing. بدع means, first; new; a first doer of a thing; novel; a thing existing for the first time; an innovator (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 118.

Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is here enjoined to tell his people that his being raised as a Divine Messenger was not a new thing. He was no innovator. They were already conversant with the phenomenon of prophethood. God had been raising His Messengers during the ages when people forsook the path of righteousness. He had raised Prophets in their neighbourhood, and, now, He had selected them for the bestowal of this great gift. They should, therefore, judge the Holy Prophet by the criteria by which the former Prophets were judged. The Holy Prophet is further asked

to tell them that though there was no doubt that ultimately his cause would triumph, he was not vouchsafed the knowledge of the vicissitudes of circumstances through which he himself would have to pass during the intervening period, nor did he know how God would treat his opponents. His mission was confined to delivering the Divine Message to them and to warn them that if they did not behave they would come to grief.

3766. Commentary :

The witness from among the Children of Israel is Moses. It is to his prophecy concerning the advent of the Holy Prophet that reference has been made in this verse. The prophecy is to this effect :

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren *like unto thee*, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him (Deut. 18 : 18-19)

See also 11 : 18.

- 2 12. And those who disbelieve say of those who believe: "If it were any good, they could not have been ahead of us *in attaining it.*" And since they have not been guided thereby, they will say, 'This is an old lie.'³⁷⁶⁷

13. And before it there was ^bthe Book of Moses, a guide and a mercy; and ^cthis is a Book in the Arabic language fulfilling *previous prophecies*, that it may warn those who do wrong; and as glad tidings to those who do good.³⁷⁶⁸

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْ كَانَ خَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَإِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوا بِهِ فَسَيَقُولُونَ

هَذَا إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ ⑪

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كُتِبَ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۖ وَهَٰذَا

كِتَابٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّنَذِرَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۖ

وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ ⑫

^a11 : 28. ^b28 : 44. ^c20 : 114 ; 42 : 8 ; 43 : 4.

The reference in the words 'a witness from among the Children of Israel' could not be, as generally misunderstood, to 'Abdullah bin Sallām, a learned Jew, because 'Abdullah had accepted Islam in Medina while this *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca.

3767. Commentary :

One of the great impediments that stand in the way of truth being accepted by disbelievers is conceit and arrogance. Since it is the poor people and those not high placed in life and generally not conversant with current material sciences, who first accept the Divine Message, the so-called learned and wealthy people regard it beneath their dignity to associate themselves with the humble and lowly believers. It is to this proud attitude of disbelievers that the verse refers. It depicts conceited and arrogant disbelievers as saying to believers, that if there had been any good in the new Teaching, they (disbelievers), who

were better placed in life and possessed better knowledge, could not have been outstripped by the former in accepting it, and that, as it was an old, old lie, they could not accept it.

3768. Commentary :

Verse 11 above referred to the appearance of a Prophet among the Ishmaelites. The present verse refers to Arabia as the scene of the advent of the Prophet who was to be the like of Moses and to the Book (the Qur'ān) which was to fulfil the prophecies contained in the Book of Moses and which also was to supersede it. The relevant prophecy is as follows :

The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they presented with their bread him that fled (Isaiah 21 : 13-15).

See also 26 : 198.

14. "Verily, those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah', and then are steadfast—no fear *shall come* upon them, nor shall they grieve.³⁷⁶⁹

15. These are the dwellers of the Garden; they shall abide therein—a recompense for what they did.

16. ^bAnd We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain, and the bearing of him and his weaning *takes* thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches *the age of* forty years, he says, "My Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and I may do such good works as may please Thee. And establish righteousness among my progeny for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to Thee."³⁷⁷⁰

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

441 : 31. b6 : 152 ; 19 : 33 ; 29 : 9. c27 : 20.

3769. Commentary :

What fear or grief, even under the severest trial, can possibly disturb the equanimity and mental poise of a true believer, who possesses an invincible faith that Allah, the Creator and Lord of the whole universe, is at his back? It is this certain faith that has caused the Faithful in all ages to lay down their lives smilingly in the cause of Truth. Such believers have been called محسنين (doers of good) in verse 13 above. They abide in the Garden of heavenly bliss and bask in the sun of God's love. See also 41 : 31.

3770. Important Words :

أشد (full maturity) is derived from شد. They say شد الشيء i.e. he made the thing hard, firm, compact, strong, or he bound it fast. أشد (ashudd)

means, physical and intellectual and also spiritual maturity as gives evidence of rectitude of conduct or course of life; firmness or soundness of judgment produced by experience. (Lane)

Commentary :

The word seems to have been used in the sense of spiritual maturity in the present verse and in 12 : 23 ; and in the sense of intellectual and physical maturity in 6 : 153 and 18 : 83. Generally, Divine Messengers are invested with their Divine mission at the age of forty. The belief that Jesus was made a Prophet at the age of 33 seems to be an historical anachronism, as recent research into Christian history has proved his birth to have taken place about six years earlier

17. These are they from whom We accept their good works and overlook their ill deeds. *They shall be among the inmates of the Garden, in fulfilment of "the true promise which was made to them."*³⁷⁷¹

18. But the one who says to his parents, 'Fie on you both; do you threaten me that I shall be brought forth *again*, when generations have already passed away before me?' And they both cry unto Allah for help and say to him: 'Woe unto thee! believe; for the promise of Allah is true.' But he says, 'This is nothing but the fables of the ancients.'³⁷⁷²

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَ
نَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَدَ
الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾
وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا اتَّعِدْنِي أَنُ
أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ مِن قَبْلِي وَهُمَا
يَسْتَعْجِلَانِ اللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ آمِنٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا
فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

417 : 109 ; 19 : 62 ; 73 : 19.

than generally understood (Enc. Brit. under "Chronicle").

أَوْزَعْنِي (grant me the power) is derived from وزع. They say فلاناً او بفلان i.e., he hindered or led or drove forth such a one and restrained him; he urged or incited such a one. أَوْزَعُ الله فلاناً means, God inspired or granted such a one the power to do a thing. See also 27 : 18.

Commentary :

In verse 13 above a brief reference has been made to محسنين (doers of good). The present verse enjoins a believer to do good (احسان) to all his fellow-beings, irrespective of caste, colour or clime, starting, however, with his parents, the mother having secured a special mention, as also in 31 : 15, because "she bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain."

In 31 : 15, it was stated that the weaning of a child takes two years, but in the verse under comment the combined period of pregnancy and suckling is given as thirty months which leaves six months as the period of gestation, and that

seems to be the period during which a pregnant woman feels the burden of pregnancy, the fourth month being the time when she begins to have such a feeling.

3771. Important Words :

تَجَاوَزَ (We shall overlook) is derived from جاز. They say جاز المكان او جاوزه i.e., he passed along the place and left it behind. جاوز الحد means, he exceeded the proper limit or bound; he was or became extravagant or exorbitant. تَجَاوَزَ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ means, he overlooked or connived at his sin; he forgave him. (Lane)

3772. Commentary :

In verse 16, reference was made to a class of men who spend their God-given gifts in the service of noble causes in order to win the pleasure of God, and who are anxious that they might be succeeded by a generation who should carry on their noble work. The verse under comment speaks of those unfortunate people who are born of good and righteous parents and are brought up in very healthy environments and yet lead a life of disbelief and sin.

19. These are they against whom the sentence of *punishment* became due, "along with the communities of the Jinn and mankind that had gone before them. Indeed, they were the losers.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ
خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ ①٩

20. And for all are degrees of *rank* according to what they did^b, and that Allah may fully repay them for their deeds; and they shall not be wronged.³⁷⁷³

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ②٠

21. And on the day when those who disbelieve will be brought before the Fire, *it will be said to them*, 'You exhausted your good things in the life of the world, and you *fully* enjoyed them. 'Now this day you shall be requited with ignominious punishment because you were arrogant in the earth without justification, and because you acted rebelliously.'³⁷⁷⁴

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَلْهَبْتُمْ
طِبَاطِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَنْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا
فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِأَنَّكُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ ②١

a3 : 38 ; 7 : 39 ; 13 : 3 ; 41 : 26.

b6 : 133.

c6 : 94.

3773. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that all the works, good or evil, of the two classes of men mentioned in vv. 16 and 18 above, will be properly judged and weighed, and, while being requited, their motives and intentions and all relevant circumstances, will be taken into consideration, as the Divine law of compensation works in this way that whereas the reward of a good deed is many times greater than the deed itself, the punishment of the evil deed is proportionate to the deed committed.

3774. Commentary :

When confronted with the consequences of their evil deeds, the disbelievers will be told on the Day of Reckoning that as they had fully exploited and drained to dregs the material gifts that God had bestowed upon them and had used them not in the service of good causes but to further their own sordid ends, they should be prepared to suffer disgrace and ignominy as a fit requital for their misdeeds.

- 3 22. And make mention of "the brother of 'Ād, when he warned his people among the sand-hills — and Warners there have been before him and after him — *saying*, 'Worship none but Allah. I fear for you the punishment of a great day.'³⁷⁷⁵

وَاذْكُرْ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنْذَرَ قَوْمَهُ بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَ
قَدْ خَلَتْ السُّدُورُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ
أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

23. They said, 'Hast thou come to us to turn us away from our gods? Bring us then that with which thou dost threaten us, if *indeed* thou art of the truthful.'^{b 3776}

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَأْفِكَنَّ عَنْ إِلَهِنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا
تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

24. He said, 'The knowledge *thereof* is only with Allah.'^c And I convey to you what I have been sent with, but I see you to be a *very* ignorant people.'³⁷⁷⁷

قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَا أُرْسِلْتُ
بِهِ وَلَكِنِّي أَرَأَيْكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

a7 : 66 ; 11 : 51. b7 : 71. c11 : 34.

3775. Commentary :

'Ād was not the name of one tribe but of a group of tribes. The tribe has been called 'Ādi Iram in the Qur'ān (89 : 8). They were a highly powerful and cultured people and had specialized in architecture. They ruled over rich and fertile territories in Yemen. As a result of their rejection of the Prophet Hūd, and their wicked and immoral deeds, they were destroyed by a violent wind which continued to lash them for seven consecutive days, burying their chief cities under heaps of sand and dust. For detailed notes on 'Ād see 11 : 51 and 26 : 124.

3776. Important Words :

لِنَأْفِكَنَّ (that thou turn us away) is derived from أَفَكَ (afaka). أَفَكَ means, he changed his or its

condition or manner of being; he turned him or it away or back from a thing by lying; he perverted his judgment; he deceived or beguiled him; he lied or said what was untrue (Lane & Aqrab). Almost all these meanings are applicable here.

3777. Commentary :

When tauntingly asked by his people, when and how they would be punished for rejecting him, Hūd pleaded ignorance of the time and manner of the Divine punishment. But he warned them at the same time that Divine punishment was sure to overtake them and that if they had some wisdom left with them they should have read the writing on the wall because the rejection of Divine Message never goes unpunished. This is the significance of the words "but I see you to be a very ignorant people."

25. Then, when they saw it coming towards their valleys as a cloud, they said, 'This is a cloud which will give us rain.' 'Nay, but it is that which you sought to hasten—"a wind wherein is a grievous punishment."³⁷⁷⁸

26. 'It will destroy everything by the command of its Lord,'^b And they became such that there was naught to be seen, except their dwellings. Thus do We requite the guilty people.³⁷⁷⁹

27. And 'We had established them in that wherein We have not established you; and We gave them ears and eyes and hearts. But their ears and their eyes and their hearts availed them naught, since they denied the Signs of Allah; and^a that at which they used to mock encompassed them.'³⁷⁸⁰

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَّتِهِمْ قَالُوا هَذَا
عَارِضٌ مُّطِيرٌ نَّابِلٌ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ رِيحٌ
فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ^{٢٥}

تَذَرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا لَا يُرَى
إِلَّا مَسْكِنُهُمْ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْجَرِيمِينَ^{٢٦}

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِيمَا إِنْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِيهِ وَجَعَلْنَا
لَهُمْ سَبْعًا وَابْتِصَارًا أَفِدَّةً^{٢٧} فَمَا أَغْنَى عَنْهُمْ
سَبْعُهُمْ وَلَا ابْتِصَارُهُمْ وَلَا أَفِدَتُهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
إِذْ كَانُوا يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمَّا كَانُوا

بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ^{٢٨}

^a41 : 17.

^b7 : 73.

^c6 : 7 ; 7 : 11.

^d11 : 9 ; 21 : 42

3778. Important Words :

عارض (cloud) is act. part. from عرض . They say عرض الشيئى i.e., he showed, manifested, presented the thing. عارض means, anything showing its breadth or side, hence appearing; a collection of clouds extending sideways in the horizon or a collection of clouds that come over in the sky unexpectedly or appear like a mountain ; a gift appearing from a person (Lane & Aqrab).

Whereas the word ريح (wind) has been used in the Qur'ān both in a good and a bad sense, its plural always is used in a good sense.

3779. Commentary :

As mentioned above, the Adites were specially advanced in architecture. They built monu-

ments on high places and erected palatial buildings. They had their summer residences, their factories and mechanical works. But they were so completely destroyed that it seemed that they had never existed and only the ruined remnants of their once lofty and strongly-built dwellings could be seen.

3780. Important Words :

أفدّة (hearts) is the plural of فؤاد which is derived from فاد . They say فاده i.e., he or it hit, struck, smote or hurt his فؤاد i.e., heart. فاد اللحم فى النار means, he roasted the flesh-meat in the fire. فؤاد is synonymous with قلب both meaning heart, mind or intellect. In the Qur'ān, too, both these words have been used synonymously. In 28 : 11 both the words

- 4 28. And We did destroy townships round about you; and We have varied the Signs, that they might turn to Us.³⁷⁸¹

29. Why, "then, did not those help them whom they had taken for gods beside Allah, seeking *His* nearness through them? Nay, they were lost to them. That was the result of their lie, and of what they fabricated.³⁷⁸²

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا

الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَلَوْلَا نَصْرُهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا

إِلَهَةً بَلْ ضَلُّوا عَنْهُمْ وَذَلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا

يَفْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

^a42 : 47.

have been used together, signifying the heart. It is the context which determines where any of these words is used in the sense of mind or heart. Some authors, however, make a distinction between فؤاد and قلب; the latter is said to have a more special signification than the former which is said to be the غشاء or the وعاء of the قلب or the middle or the interior thereof. They say طار فؤاده i.e., his mind or intellect or courage fled (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

This verse also shows that the Adites were a very powerful and prosperous people. Their dominions extended over vast areas.

3781. Commentary :

The reference in the words "We did destroy townships round about you" is to the destruction of the once very powerful and prosperous people of 'Ād and of Tubba' who held sway over vast territories in the south of Arabia. To the north-west the complete ruin of the Thamūd tribe held out a severe warning and on the shores of the Dead Sea were situated the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah which were turned upside down on account of the unnatural vice indulged in by them. The destruction of all

these places constituted an eye-opener to the Meccans. If they did not eschew their evil ways and continued to reject the Divine Message, they would meet with no better fate. As the Qur'ān, the final Law for all mankind, was revealed at Mecca, the words, ما حولكم من القرى may also signify the whole world.

The Qur'ān reverts again and again to the fundamental problems of faith, morals and other kindred subjects, and deals with them from different angles and points of view in order to satisfy doubts and misgivings of men of varied attitudes, mental make-up or outlook on life. People of shallow thinking and prejudiced minds may call it a repetition, but in fact it is the right approach to different human problems.

3782. Important Words :

قرباناً (seeking nearness) is infinitive noun from قرب إليه و منه . They say قرب لله قرباناً (qarraba): he made an offering to God. قربان means, an offering or oblation; a sacrifice; anything by means of which one seeks nearness to God; a near or favourite associate or companion (Lane & Aqrab). The word has been used in the latter sense in 39 : 4.

30. And *remember* when "We turned towards thee a party of the Jinn who wished to hear the Qur'an and, when they were present at its *recitation*, they said to one another, 'Be silent, and listen' and, when it was finished, they went back to their people, warning *them*."³⁷⁸³

31. They said, 'O our people ^bwe have heard a Book, which has been sent down after Moses, fulfilling that which is before it; it guides to the truth, and to the right path."³⁷⁸⁴

32. 'O our people, respond to Allah's Summoner and believe in Him. "He will forgive you your sins, and protect you from a painful punishment."³⁷⁸⁵

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ
فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَى
قَوْمِهِمْ مُّنْذِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

قَالُوا يَقُومُنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كُتُبًا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى
طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

يَقُومُنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ
مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

^a72 : 2. ^b72 : 2-3. ^c72 : 14.

Commentary :

The verse contains a very challenging argument against idolatry and drives home to polytheists the futility of their idolatrous beliefs and practices, saying that their false gods can never help them in time of need while the True Almighty God comes to the rescue of His servants when they are in distress and call for His help.

3783. Important Words :

نَفَرًا (a party) is derived from نفر (*nafara*) which means, he ran away at random; he broke loose and went hither and thither; he became separated and returned to a distance. نفر (*nafarun*) means, a number of men from three to ten or less than ten; a man's people or tribe consisting of his near relations (Lane).

Commentary :

The party of men referred to in the verse were the Jews of Naṣībīn or, as some say, from Maṣāl or Nineveh in Iraq. Being apprehen-

sive of the Meccans' opposition they met the Holy Prophet at night and after listening to the Qur'an and to the Holy Prophet's discourse, they became converted to Islam and carried the new Message to their people who also readily accepted it. The next verse leaves no doubt that they were Jews and seemed to be the leaders of their people (Bayān, vol. 8). See also 72 : 2. 3784. **Commentary :**

This verse clearly shows that the party of men mentioned in the previous verse were Jews because they spoke of the Qur'an as "the Book which has been sent down after Moses."

3785. Commentary :

This and the next verse contain some basic arguments which establish the truth of the claims of a Divine Reformer. First, people are cleansed of sins and impurities and become a model of virtue and righteousness through the Teaching revealed to him and by his own ennobling example.

33. "And whoso does not respond to Allah's Summoner, he cannot escape Him in the earth, nor can he have any protector beside Him. Such are in manifest error."³⁷⁸⁶

وَمَنْ لَا يُجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءُ أُولَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. Have they not seen that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation, ^bhas the power to give life to the dead? Yea, verily, He has power over all things.³⁷⁸⁷

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
وَلَمْ يَعْ يَخْلُقْهُنَّ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى
بَلَى إِنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. And on the day when those who disbelieve will be brought before the Fire, ^cit will be said to them, 'Is not this the truth?' They will say, 'Aye, by our Lord.' He will say, 'Then taste the punishment, because you disbelieved.'

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا
بِالْحَقِّ قَالُوا بَلَى وَرَبِّنَا قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

^a72 : 16. ^b17 : 100 ; 36 : 82 ; 86 : 9. ^c6 : 28.

3786. Commentary :

Secondly, the Divine Reformer does eventually succeed in his mission as it is God's unalterable decree and law that Truth must prevail and falsehood must come to an evil end. The disbelievers cannot alter this Divine decree, try as they might. The gods which they adore leave them in the lurch when they are confronted with the consequences of their wicked deeds.

3787. Important Words :

لم يعي (was not wearied). عي بأمره means, he lacked power, strength or ability for, or was unable to perform or execute, his affair

thoroughly. أعيا means, he was or became disabled or incapacitated; he was or became fatigued, tired, wearied. اعياء is weakness and fatigue which is the result of doing a thing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means to say that the process of the creation of new heavens and earth has not ceased. Neither is it an empty and unsubstantiated claim. With the coming of a great Divine Reformer the old order dies and a new one takes its place. This signifies the coming into being of a new heaven and a new earth.

36. Have patience, then, as the Messengers *possessed* of high resolve had patience ; and be in no haste about them. On the day when they see that with which they are threatened, it will appear to them "as though they had not tarried save for an hour of a day. *This warning* has been conveyed; and none but the disobedient people shall be destroyed.^{3787A}

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا
تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ
لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ بَلِغْ فَمَهْلُكُمْ
إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ٣٦

10 : 46 ; 30 : 56 ; 79 : 47.

3787A. Commentary :

In this verse the Holy Prophet is told that with his advent a new heaven and a new earth would be born. The old decrepit order would die and a new and better one would emerge from its ruins. But before that great and glorious day his own mettle and that of his followers would be put to a severe test. They will have to bear, with patience and fortitude, like great Prophets

of God, very great hardships and privations, and it is after they will come out of the ordeal triumphantly and unscathed that their cause will prevail. That would be a glorious day for believers ; and for the disbelievers a time of heart-burning and gnashing of teeth. So severe and swift and overwhelming would be God's punishment that compared to it a whole life spent in comfort and ease would seem but an "hour."

CHAPTER 47

MUḤAMMAD

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūra* takes its title from its third verse. It is also known as *قتال* (war) because it devotes a large portion of its text to the subject of war—its causes, ethics and consequences. The fact that the *Sūra* deals mainly with the fighting which took place after the Holy Prophet had emigrated to Medina and that it makes repeated mention of the Hypocrites with whom the Muslims came in contact at that place, lends powerful support to the view held by Baiḍāwī, Zamakhsharī, Sayūṭī, and others that the *Sūra* was revealed after the Hijra—a large part of it having been revealed probably before the Battle of Badr, in the early days of the life at Medina.

Towards the end of the previous *Sūra* it was unambiguously and emphatically stated that opposition to the Divine Message, however powerful, organized, and persistent, can never succeed and that Truth must prevail. The subject assumes a certain definiteness in this *Sūra*, and disbelievers are told that in conformity with the unalterable Divine Law that Truth must ultimately triumph over falsehood, the Holy Prophet and his followers, though in a weak state in the beginning and though their cause seemingly hopeless, will, after overcoming all difficulties and impediments, succeed in the long run, their weakness progressively giving place to strength.

Subject-Matter of the *Sūra*

The *Sūra* opens with the challenging statement that all the efforts of disbelievers to retard and arrest the progress of Islam will come to naught and the condition of the Prophet's followers will improve day by day. It then proceeds to say that since disbelievers have drawn the sword against the Prophet they shall perish by the sword. After holding out to Muslims a definite promise of success against their enemies, it briefly lays down important rules of war, as, for instance, prisoners can be taken only after regular fighting in which the enemy is decisively beaten (v. 5), but after the war is over, they are to be set free either as an act of favour, or, after taking proper ransom. Thus the *Sūra*, in a little verse, strikes effectively at the evil practice of slavery.

It is further stated that falsehood, though in a position of strength and power against Truth in the beginning, eventually must suffer defeat. This is a lesson writ large on the pages of history, and the evil fate of peoples nearer home such as 'Ād, Thamūd, Midian and the people of Lot should open the eyes of the Meccans. Next, the *Sūra* says a few words of comfort and good cheer to the Holy Prophet, telling him that though he is being hounded out of his native place, friendless and apparently helpless, to seek refuge in a distant place among alien people, yet this

very fact will lay the foundation of a great future for his Faith and his followers. His opponents seem to be very powerful but "there have been towns, more powerful than the town which has driven thee out," and yet God destroyed them and so will He destroy the enemies of the Prophet. They are satisfied with having driven him out of Mecca and seem to have a false sense of complacency that thereby they have nipped the tender plant of Islam in the bud, but in fact they have laid the foundation of their own ruin if they could but read the writing on the wall.

Next, the *Sūra* briefly mentions the aims and objects of war according to Islam. Since it requires very sincere and honest adherence to a cause to imperil one's life, honour, or property for it, war, which puts to test one's sincerity or true adherence to a cause, was enjoined upon Muslims in self-defence so that true and sincere believers might be distinguished from the Hypocrites and those weak of faith. Whereas, says the *Sūra*, the believers welcome a revelation enjoining them to fight in the way of Allah, for it is in fighting that the real mettle of a man is tested, the disbelievers, and the Hypocrites feel as if they are being driven to death. Thus true believers are separated and sifted out from those who are insincere or false in the profession of their faith. The *Sūra* closes with a further exhortation to Muslims to be prepared to spend whatever they possess for the cause they hold so dear, because to be stingy and niggardly when the cause requires its votaries to spend with both hands, is calculated not only to injure the cause but also the individual himself.



1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁷⁸⁸

2. ^bThose who disbelieve and hinder *men* from the way of Allah—He renders their works vain.³⁷⁸⁹

3. But *as for* those who believe and do good works and believe in that which has been revealed to Muhammad—and it is the truth from their Lord^c—He removes from them their sins and sets right their affairs.³⁷⁹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ

أَعْمَالَهُمْ ②

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ

عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا كُفْرَ عَنْهُمْ

سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b4 : 168; 16 : 89.

^c13 : 20; 22 : 55; 34 : 7.

3788. **Commentary :**

See 1 : 1.

3789. **Commentary :**

Works of disbelievers are rendered vain in that their efforts to arrest the progress of the cause of Truth produce no results. The cause of Truth triumphs and prevails.

3790. **Important Words :**

بَالَهُمْ (their affairs) is substantive noun from بَال (bāla) which means, it (fat) melted or dissolved. بَال means, a state, condition or case (12 : 51). هُوَ فِي الْبَالِ means : (1) he is in ample and easy circumstances or condition. (2) A thing or affair to which one devotes his special care. They say لَيْسَ هَذَا بَالِي *i.e.*, this is not of the things for which I care. (3) The heart or mind. خَطَرَ بَالِي means, it occurred to me. (4) Attention. أَنْعِنِي بِالِكَ *i.e.* give me thy attention (Lane & Aqrab).

الْحَقُّ (truth) means, an established fact which is undeniable; a right, equity or justice; a thing that is decreed ; a thing suitable to the requirements of justice; truth; wisdom;

what is binding ; obligatory, just, proper ; right ; genuine, authentic, real; prudence (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary :

Because belief in the Holy Prophet, as in all Divine Messengers, is included in the words “those who believe and do good works,” the expression “and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad” seems to be redundant. But nothing in the Qur’ān is redundant or superfluous. The expression serves a definite purpose. It removes a possible misconception, that belief in God and belief in life after death alone are the two fundamental articles of Faith (2 : 63). The verse leaves no doubt about the indispensability of belief in the Holy Prophet by saying that what has been revealed to him is الحق *i.e.*, it is the whole truth and nothing but the truth ; it agrees with the requirements of justice, truth and wisdom, and fully meets the exigencies and circumstances of time and the varying human needs, and by it moral lapses of those who believe in him are obliterated, their difficulties removed and their condition progressively bettered.

4. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood while those who believe follow the truth from their Lord. Thus does Allah set forth for men their similitudes.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ
لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ ۝

5. And "when you meet in regular battle those who disbelieve, smite their necks; and, when you have overcome them, bind fast the fetters—then afterwards either release them as a favour or by taking ransom—until the war lays down its burdens. That is the ordinance. And if Allah had so pleased, He could have punished them *Himself*, but *He has willed* that He may try some of you by others. And those who are killed in the way of Allah—He will never render their works vain.³⁷⁹¹

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
أَخْنَتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَثَاقَ ۖ فَإِمَّا مَنًّا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا
فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ
اللَّهُ لَأَنْصَرَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ۖ وَ
الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝

48 : 46, 68.

3791. Important Words :

أَخْنَتُمُوهُمْ (you have overcome them). أَخْن is transitive from ثَخَنَ (*thakhuna*) or *thakhana*) which means, it was or became thick or coarse. أَخْنَهُ means, he rendered him heavy or languid or enervated; or he overcame him after inflicting many wounds on him. أَخْنَ فِي means, he made a great slaughter among the enemy or inflicted heavy wounds upon him. أَخْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ means, he caused much slaughter in the land; or he fought vehemently in the land (Lane & Aqrab).

لَأَنْصَرَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ (He would have punished them) is derived from نَصَرَ. They say نَصَرَ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِ i.e., God helped, aided or assisted him against his enemy or made him victorious. أَنْصَرَ means, he defended himself against his injurer. أَنْصَرَ مِنْهُ means, he exacted his right or due completely

from him; he avenged himself upon him; he punished him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse, in a nutshell, lays down some important rules about the ethics of war and its conduct and incidentally deals a death blow to slavery. Briefly these are: (a) When they are engaged in regular battle in the defence of their faith, honour, lives or property, the Muslims are enjoined to fight bravely and relentlessly, giving no quarter, and expecting none from the enemy; and not to flee from the field of battle under lame or weak excuses. They must either win or die. "He who turns his back to the enemy", says the Qur'ān, "draws upon himself the wrath of Allah" (8:13-17). (b) When war is once started, it should continue till peace is established and freedom of conscience secured

6. He will guide them and improve their condition.³⁷⁹²

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ⑥

7. And "admit them into the Garden which He has made known to them."³⁷⁹³

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَفَهَا لَهُمْ ⑦

43 : 196 ; 9 : 111.

(8 : 40). (c). Prisoners are to be taken from the enemy, only after regular and pitched battle has been fought, and the enemy is decidedly and positively beaten. Thus regular war is declared to be the only reason for taking prisoners ; for no other cause free men are to be deprived of their liberty. (d). When war is over, prisoners should be released, either as an act of favour, or on taking ransom or by negotiating mutual exchange. They should not be held permanently in captivity or treated as slaves. The Holy Prophet carried this Divine Commandment into actual practice by setting at liberty about a hundred families of Banī Muṣṭaliq and several thousand prisoners of Hawāzin after both these tribes had been decisively beaten in battle. It was after the Battle of Badr that ransom was accepted for the prisoners who were set free. This was perhaps, because Islam was then in a very weak state. But, on this occasion too, those of them who could not pay their ransom in money but were literate, were required to teach reading and writing to some of the Muslims. The verse thus has struck very effectively at the roots of slavery, abolishing it completely and for ever. (Muir, Zurqānī & Hishām).

The words "And if Allah had so pleased, he could have punished them Himself, but He has willed that He may try some of you by others," signify that God possessed the power to punish the enemies of Truth without the instrumentality of Muslims but He got the latter engaged in fighting with disbelievers so that on the one hand

their own good qualities of character should have an opportunity to come into play and on the other the bad qualities of disbelievers should become exposed. Perhaps in no other aspect of life was the moral superiority of the Companions of the Holy Prophet so clearly demonstrated as in their treatment of their fallen foes.

The words "And those who are killed in the way of Allah—He will never render their works vain," mean that the sacrifice of Muslims slain in the field of battle would not be wasted. It was their sacrifice that firmly laid the foundation of a bright future for Islam.

3792. Commentary :

Since one of the meanings of هداية is to follow the right path till one reaches one's destination and achieves the object of one's quest (Lane), the verse purports to say that the martyred Muslims have achieved, by their death, the object for which they gave their lives which was to attain God's pleasure and to make Islam secure and strong.

3793. Important Words :

عرف (made known) is transitive verb from عرف ('arafa) which means, he knew it or became acquainted with it; he knew it by means of one of the senses and also by mental perception. عرفه الامر ('arrafa) means, he acquainted

8. O ye who believe! if you help *the cause of Allah*, He will help you and will make your steps firm.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَ
يُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ⑧

9. But *as far* those who disbelieve, perdition is their *lot*; and He will make their works vain.³⁷⁹⁴

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَتَعْسًا لَهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ⑨

10. That is because they hate what Allah has revealed; so He has made their works futile.³⁷⁹⁵

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ اللَّهُ فَاحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ⑩

him with the affair. عرف also means, rendering a thing fragrant, and adorning, decorating or embellishing it (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse means that the Muslims slain in the way of Allah will be admitted into gardens of Paradise of which they had a foretaste in the present life. They had a foretaste of them in the sense that they enjoyed in their physical form all those spiritual blessings and favours which are mentioned in the Qur'an as having been promised to them in the next world. Or the verse may signify that Muslims had a spiritual foretaste of "the Garden" because they saw with their own eyes promises, made to them in the Qur'an about Paradise, being fulfilled in this very life.

3794. Important Words :

تَعْسًا (perdition) is inf. noun from تعس

(*ta'sa*) which means, he stumbled and fell upon his face; he missed his proof in litigation and the object of his search in seeking; he became far-removed; he became degraded. الله تعسه means, God destroyed him; degraded him; made him fall on his face. له تعساً means, may he fall never to rise; may he perish; may ruin cleave to him or may he be degraded. تعس means, ruin, degradation, mischief, evil (Lane & Aqrab).

3795. Commentary :

Three times in the few verses that have gone before is it stated that "God has made the works of disbelievers vain." This signifies that disbelievers had bent all their energies, of mind and body, to the achievement of one supreme desire — to see Islam fail and come to nought. But Islam triumphed. It progressed and prospered and the disbelievers failed to have their desire fulfilled.

11. "Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those who were before them? Allah utterly destroyed them, and for the disbelievers there will be the like thereof.³⁷⁹⁶

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ دَمَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَاللَّكْفِيرِينَ أَمْثَالَهَا ⑪

12. That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, and as for the disbelievers, there is no protector for them.

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ
لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ ⑫

2 13. Verily, Allah will make those who believe and do good works enter the Gardens underneath which rivers flow;^c while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire will be their resort^d.³⁷⁹⁷

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
يَسْتَعْمُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ
مَثْوًى لَهُمْ ⑬

14. And how many a township, more powerful than thy town which has driven thee out, have We destroyed, and they had no helper:³⁷⁹⁸

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنْ قَرْيَتِكَ
الَّتِي أَخْرَجْتَكَ أَهْلُكُنْهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ⑭

^a12 : 110 ; 22 : 47; 30 : 10 ; 35 : 45 ; 40 : 22. ^b 3 : 151; 8 : 41.

^c14 : 24; 22 : 24; 29 : 10. ^d14 : 31; 15 : 4; 77 : 47.

3796. Commentary :

As many as fifteen times, the disbelievers of the Holy Prophet have been warned in the Qur'an to travel in the earth and see the dreadful end to which the disbelievers of former Prophets have come. How can they, the verse warns them, expect to escape a similar fate? The expression أمثالها shows that Divine punishment will overtake disbelievers in various forms and shapes.

3797. Commentary :

The believers make use of the things of the

world and eat and drink as do the disbelievers, but whereas the former eat to live in order to serve God and man, the latter live to eat, drink, and be merry, and have no nobler objects to pursue. They do not rise above the level of animals as their whole concept of life is materialistic.

3798. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a mighty prophecy. According to the majority of scholarly opinion it was revealed while the Holy Prophet was on his way from Mecca to Medina, having been driven

15. Then, "is he who *takes his stand* upon a clear proof from his Lord like those to whom the evil of their deeds is made *to look* beautiful and who follow their evil inclinations?³⁷⁹⁹

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ كُنْزِينَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ ١٥

16. ^bA description of the Garden promised to the righteous: Therein are rivers of water which corrupts not; and rivers of milk of which the taste changes not; and rivers of wine, a delight to those who drink; and rivers of clarified honey. And in it will they have all *kinds* of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. Can *those who enjoy such bliss* be like those who abide in the Fire and who are given boiling water to drink so that it tears their bowels?³⁸⁰⁰

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُل الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ كُنْزٌ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيماً فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ۖ ١٦

a11 : 29

b13 : 36.

out of his beloved native place, with a price put on his head. The Prophet was friendless and his cause seemed hopeless. He was hourly in fear of being caught, as Medina was far away and the country-side swarmed with adventurers who sought to bring him dead or alive to get the much-coveted prize. It was at that critical hour that the verse was revealed. It promised a safe journey for the Prophet and the eventual destruction of his enemies.

3799. Commentary :

The preceding verse promised a bright future for Islam and the ultimate destruction of disbelief, at a time when the Prophet's cause seemed quite hopeless. The verse under comment continues the theme and says that the outcome could not possibly be otherwise as the claim of the Holy Prophet was reinforced and substantiated by incontrovertible heavenly

Signs while disbelievers had nothing to their credit but wicked deeds and evil desires.

3800. Important Words :

أنهار (rivers) is the plural of نهر which is inf. noun from نهر (nahara) which means, it flowed or flowed with force. نهر means, a river, a brook, a stream. The word also means, amplitude, or light and amplitude (Lane).

عسل (honey) is inf. noun from عسل ('asala). عسل الطعام means, he prepared the food with honey. They say عسله i.e., he made him an object of eulogy; he made him an object of love to men. عسل means, honey; flowers or blossoms because honey is made therefrom; a good or righteous deed, the eulogy for which a person is deemed sweet (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse mentions four kinds of favours and blessings promised to believers in this and the

17. And among them are some who listen to thee till, when they go forth from thy presence, they say to those who have been given knowledge, 'What has he been talking about just now?' "Those are they whose hearts Allah has sealed, and who follow their own evil inclinations.³⁸⁰¹

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ
عِنْدِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ أَنفَا
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاتَّبَعُوا
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٧﴾

a9 : 93; 16 : 109; 63 : 4.

next life, i.e., rivers of pure water, rivers of milk of which the taste does not change, rivers of wine which gives delight and rivers of clarified honey. The word أنهار which has been used four times in the verse, besides other senses, signifies light and amplitude; and غسل, among other things, means a good or righteous deed which wins for the doer the love and esteem of men. In view of the signification of these two words the verse may mean that the four things mentioned will be given to the righteous in plenty: viz., water which is the source of all life (21 : 31); milk which, besides giving health and vigour to the body, stands for spiritual knowledge; wine which gives pleasant sensations and forgetfulness of worries; and honey, being the means of curing many a disease, represents good and righteous deeds which make the believers beloved of men. Taken in the physical sense, i.e., pertaining to the present life, the verse would signify that in the present life the believers will have in plenty all those things which make life pleasant, delightful and useful; and taken symbolically and in a spiritual sense, it would mean that believers will have a full life, they will be endowed with spiritual knowledge, will drink the wine of God's love and will do deeds that will win for them love and esteem of men.

3801. Commentary :

As the principal subject of the *Sūra* is war, it naturally deals with three categories of men, viz., true believers, firm disbelievers and the Hypocrites who vacillate between faith and disbelief. The verse under comment deals with the third category of men.

The expression ما ذا قال آنفا has a two-fold meaning. A hypocrite being a double-faced person generally uses language susceptible of double meaning. This he does in order to extricate himself from an awkward position, wherein, should one construction of his speech land him in trouble, he might be able to avoid that consequence by putting quite a different construction on it. The above expression is an appropriate instance of the equivocal language used by the Hypocrites of Medina. If one of them, after a meeting with the Prophet, happened to meet a Muslim, he would say "What was it that he said just now," meaning, what beautiful and highly useful things had the Prophet said. But if he chanced to meet a hypocrite like himself he would use the same expression but meaning "what nonsense talk had the Prophet indulged in."

18. But as for those who follow guidance, "He adds to their guidance, "and bestows on them righteousness suited to their condition."³⁸⁰²

19. They wait not but for the Hour, that it should come upon them suddenly. ^bThe signs thereof have already come. But *of* what *avail* will their admonition be to them when it has *actually* come upon them.³⁸⁰³

20. Know, therefore, that there is no God other than Allah, and ask protection for thy frailties, and for believing men and believing women. And Allah knows the place where you move about and the place where you stay.³⁸⁰⁴

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ ۝

فَهُلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً
فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا فَأَنَّى لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ
ذِكْرُهَا ۝

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَ
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَ
مَثْوَاكُمْ ۝

48 : 3; 9 : 124; 18 : 14. b22 : 56; 43 : 67.

3802. Commentary :

The expression *آتاهم تقواهم* may mean: (a) God made them righteous; (b) He disclosed to them the ways and means by employing which they could attain *تقوى* (c) Allah bestowed upon believers favours and blessings which are the result of a life of righteousness.

3803. Important Words :

أشراط (signs) is the plural of *شرط*. They say *شرط عليه بكذا* i.e. he imposed upon him such a condition. *أشراط نفسه لكذا* means, he marked himself for such an affair. *شرط* means, a sign, token or mark. *أشراط الناس* means, the best or meanest of men (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Disbelievers are so obstinate in rejecting the Divine Message that they would not listen to any

argument but would continue to insist that the threatened punishment should come soon. But, the verse purports to say, the signs of their destruction have already appeared if they but read them. When, however, punishment would actually arrive, their repentance would be of no avail. Why don't they then take heed before it is too late? The reference in the word *أشراط* (signs) seems to be to the Holy Prophet's flight from Mecca which proved to be the prelude to the appearance of many Signs.

3804. Commentary :

For the meaning and significance of the expression *استغفر لذنبيك* see a detailed note on 40 : 56 & 48 : 3. The words *متقلبكم ومثواكم* may mean, when you move about transacting your affairs and when you take rest, or *متقلبكم* may apply to this world and *مثواكم* to the next.

٢. 3 21. And those who believe say, 'Why is not a Sūra revealed?' But when a decisive Sūra is revealed and fighting is mentioned therein, thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease, looking towards thee with the look of one in a death-faint. So ruin seize them!³⁸⁰⁵

22. Obedience and "reasonable speech is proper for them. And when the matter is determined upon, it is good for them if they were true to Allah.³⁸⁰⁶

23. Would you then, if you are placed in authority, create disorder in the land and sever your ties of kinship?³⁸⁰⁷

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۚ فَإِذَا
أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ رَأَيْتَ
الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُنْظَرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ
الْمُسْتَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ فَأُولَىٰ لَهُمْ
طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ الْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ
صَدَقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ ۚ
فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ ۚ

2 : 264.

3805. Important Words :

أولئ (ruin) is derived from ولى and means, nearer; more deserving; more competent; more fit. The expression أولئ لك is used to give warning, and means mischief or trouble has approached near thee, so be on your guard. The expression also means, woe to thee; woe be thy lot (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means to say that whereas true believers avidly wait for a verse to be revealed which should embody a Divine commandment directing them to fight in the way of Allah, "those in whose heart is a disease," shudder at the very idea of being invited to fight.

3806. Important Words :

صدقوا الله (were true to Allah). صدق في الحديث means, he told or spoke the truth. صدق في القتال

means, he fought well; he gave a good account of himself in the fight. صدق اللقاء means, he was firm in fight. صدق الصبح means, the dawn shone clearly. صدقنى وعده means, he fulfilled, or he was true to his promise with me. The Quranic expression صدقوا ما عاهدوا الله عليه (33 : 24) means, they were true to their covenant with Allah and fulfilled it (Lane & Aqrab).

3807. Commentary :

The verse signifies that believers have been allowed to fight because if the power of disbelievers had not been broken, they would have created disorder in the land and would have severed all ties of kinship and trampled under foot all rightful claims. The verse also signifies that if believers refused to fight the disbelievers now, Arabia would continue to suffer from disruption and disintegration and forces of evil would stalk the land.

24. It is these whom Allah curses so that He makes them deaf and makes their eyes blind.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّى
أَبْصَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. "Will they not, then, ponder over the Qur'an, or is it that on the hearts are their locks?"³⁸⁰⁸

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٥﴾

26. Surely, ^bthose who turn their backs after guidance has become manifest to them, Satan has seduced them, and holds out false hopes to them.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ وَأَمَلًا
لَّهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. That is because they said to those who hate what Allah has revealed, 'We will obey you in some matters', and Allah knows their secrets.³⁸⁰⁹

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرَهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ
سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأُمْرِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. But how *will they fare* when the angels will cause them to die^c, smiting their faces and their backs?

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ
وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

^a4 : 83. ^b2 : 218 ; 3 : 87 ; 5 : 55. ^c4 : 98 ; 8 : 51 ; 16 : 29.

3808. Commentary :

This verse constitutes an enlargement of the one preceding it. It purports to say that it is because disbelievers do not ponder over the Qur'an and do not try to understand and realise the real purpose of Islamic wars that they lose their spiritual sight and hearing and begin to find fault with the Quranic commandments about war.

3809. Commentary :

The reference in the words, "those who hate

what Allah has revealed," is to disbelievers who "never liked that any good should be sent down to the Faithful from their Lord" (2 : 106). The Hypocrites would not side with disbelievers openly and unreservedly. A hypocrite is too wily a person to burn his boats. He faces both ways. But, says the verse, God would expose their double-facedness. This is the significance of the words "Allah knows their secrets."

29. That is because they followed that which displeased Allah, and disliked *the seeking of His pleasure*. So he rendered their works vain.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اتَّبَعُوا مَا آسَخَطَ اللَّهُ وَكَرِهُوا
رِضْوَانَهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ^{٢٩}

٢. 4 30. Do those in whose hearts is a disease suppose that Allah will not bring to light their malice?³⁸¹⁰

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَن لَّنْ يُخْرِجَ
اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ^{٣٠}

31. And if We pleased, We could show them to thee so that thou shouldst know them by their marks. And thou shalt surely recognize them by the tone of *their speech*. And Allah knows your deeds.³⁸¹¹

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكَهُمْ فَלَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَ
لَتَعَرَفْتَهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ^{٣١}

32. And We will surely try you until We distinguish those among you who strive *for the cause of God* and those who are steadfast.^a And We will make known the facts about you.³⁸¹²

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجْهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَ
الصَّابِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ^{٣٢}

^{٢٩} : 141—143; 29 : 4,12.

3810. Important Words :

أَضْغَانُهُمْ (their malice) is the plural of ضَغْنٌ (*dighnun*) which is inf. noun from ضَغِنَ (*daghana*). ضَغِنَ عَلَيْهِ means, he was or became affected with rancour, malice or spite against him. ضَغْنٌ means, rancour, malice, spite ; violent hatred, enmity; desire or yearning or longing of the soul, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

3811. Important Words :

لَحْنٌ (tone) is inf. noun from لَحَنَ (*lahana*). They say لَحَنَ لَهُ i.e., he said to him something which he (the latter) understood but which was unintelligible to others; he intimated to him something which he alone understood ; he spoke obliquely or ambiguously. لَحْنٌ means, the meaning of speech ; its intended sense or import; its intent (it is direct and also indirect); an oblique or ambiguous mode of speech; an

inclining of speech to obliqueness, or ambiguity, and equivocal allusion (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

A hypocrite faces both ways. He never talks straight and always indulges in ambiguous and equivocal speech so that it conveys one sense to one person and quite another sense to another person. It is to this crooked manner of speech of the Hypocrites that reference has also been made in 2 : 105.

3812. Important Words :

نَعْلَمُ (We distinguish). عِلْمُهُ means; he knew it; he became acquainted with it. It is syn. with عَرَفَهُ, but عِلْمٌ ('ilm) is wider and more general in signification than عَرَفَ and means, he knew it intuitively and inferentially (i.e. تَبَيَّنَ) They say لَا أَعْلَمُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَمْرِو i.e., that I may

33. Those who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of Allah and "oppose the Messenger after guidance has become manifest to them, shall not harm Allah in the least ; and He will make their works fruitless.

34. O ye who believe! obey Allah and obey the Messenger and let not your works go vain.

35. Verily, those who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of Allah, and then die while they are disbelievers—Allah certainly will not forgive them.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَ
شَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى
لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيُحِطُّ أَعْمَالُهُمْ ﴿٣٣﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ
وَلَا تُبْطِلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ
مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ﴿٣٥﴾

^a8 : 14; 59 : 5.

^b3 : 92; 4 : 19.

distinguish 'Abdullah from 'Umar. The root meaning of علم (ilm) is that of a mark or sign by which one thing is distinguished from another (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 144 and 3 : 141.

نبلو (make known) is derived from بلا . They say ابتلاه or أبلاه or بلاه i.e., He (God) tested him with good or evil; he knew it or became acquainted with it; he informed him or acquainted him with it; he manifested it; he revealed it (Lane & Aqrab).

أخباركم (facts about you), أخبار is the plural of خبر which means, a piece of information; an announcement; an account; a man's case or state, etc. The difference between خبر and نبأ is that while the former word means, an ordinary news, the latter signifies a news or announcement or information of great import and significance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Taking into consideration the root-meanings of the words بلا and خبر and علم, the verse would signify that God makes believers pass through travails, trials and tribulations and He has enjoined fighting on them that sincere believers may become distinguished from the Hypocrites and that the qualities of head and heart of believers and also the results of their steadfastness and fortitude amidst hardships and privations may have an opportunity to come into actual play.

It may also be noted that knowledge (علم) is of two kinds: (a) knowledge about a thing before its occurrence; and (b) knowledge about it after it has actually happened. Knowledge referred to in the verse under comment belongs to the latter category.

36. So "be not slack and sue not for peace; for you will *certainly* have the upper hand. And Allah is with you, and He will not deprive you of the *reward* of your actions.³⁸¹³

37. ^bThe life of *this* world is but a sport and a pastime, and if you believe and be righteous, He will give you your rewards, and will not ask of you your possessions.³⁸¹⁴

38. If He ask them of you, and press you, you would be niggardly, and He would bring to light your malice.³⁸¹⁵

فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلَامِ وَأَنْتُمْ الْآغْلَوْنَ
وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتَرَكَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ۝٣٦

إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوَ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ أَجْرَكُمْ وَلَا يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ ۝٣٧

إِنْ يَسْأَلْكُمُوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوا وَيُخْرِجْ
أَضْغَانَكُمْ ۝٣٨

a3 : 140. b6 : 33; 29 : 65; 57 : 21.

3813. Important Words :

لَنْ يَتَرَكَمُ (will not deprive you). يَتَرَ is derived from وَتَرَ . They say وَتَرَهُ حَقَّهُ i.e., he made him to suffer loss or detriment in respect of his right; or he deprived him or defrauded him of it partially or wholly (Aqrah).

Commentary :

As the *Sūra* primarily deals with the subject of war, the Muslims are enjoined here that when once the fighting has started, they are not to sue for peace, whatever form or shape the fortunes of war may take. They are to win either victory or martyrdom. The verse, besides laying this heavy responsibility on Muslims, makes to them an unequivocal promise of victory in the words "You will certainly have the upper hand as Allah is with you." But whereas, on the one hand, Muslims are not to sue for peace under any circumstances, on the other, they are not to reject overtures of peace made by the enemy even if by doing so he seeks to deceive Muslims or to gain time (8 : 62). Islam is a religion of peace. It has certainly permitted its followers to take up arms in self-defence, or,

when refusal to fight means sure destruction. But it has also enjoined them to cease fighting, whatever the circumstances, when an offer of peace is made by the opposite side.

3814. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that as Muslims have been enjoined to fight in the cause of God, they will have to bear the expenses of war and for this purpose they will have to make sacrifices of life and money. But God does not need their money. It is for their own benefit that sacrifices of life and money are demanded of them because no success is possible without such sacrifices. True believers must understand and realise this supreme lesson.

3815. Commentary :

The verse applies to Hypocrites. Though professing to be Muslims, they will not spend their money in the cause of Islam, however pressing its need might be, because their hearts are full of rancour, malice and spite against it. But whatever they may or may not do, Islam will be victorious and their rancour and malevolence would be exposed.

39. Behold, you are those who are called upon to spend in the way of Allah; but of you there are some who are niggardly. And whoso is niggardly, is niggardly only against his own soul. And Allah is Self-Sufficient,^a and it is you that are needy. ^bAnd if you turn your backs, He will bring in your stead a people other than you, then they will not be like you.³⁸¹⁶

هَآأَنْتُمْ هَآؤَآءُ تَدْعُونَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَتَخَلَّ وَ مَنْ يَتَخَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَخْلُ عَنْ
نَفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ ۝٣٩

^a35 : 16. ^b5 : 55.

3816. Commentary :

The address in this verse is of general application. Miserliness is a deadly moral disease that eats into the vitals of man's moral and spiritual well-being. Elsewhere the Qur'ān has used very strong language

about misers or niggardly people (9 : 35). When the Holy Prophet was once asked as to whom the words, "He will bring instead a people other than you," referred, he is reported to have said, "If Faith were to go up to the Pleiads, a man of Persian descent will bring it back to the earth" (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī).

CHAPTER 48

AL-FATH

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

According to consensus of scholarly opinion the *Sūra* was revealed when, after signing the Treaty of Hudaibiya, the Holy Prophet was on his way back to Medina, in the 6th year of Hijra in the month of Dhu'l-Qa'dah (Bukhārī). The Treaty being an epoch-making event, all incidents connected with it have been carefully preserved in Islamic history. So complete agreement exists concerning the date and place of the revelation of this *Sūra*. The *Sūra* is entitled Al-Fath (the Victory). The title is appropriate in that a seemingly diplomatic defeat eventually proved to be a master-stroke of strategy and led to the fall of Mecca, and consequently the conquest of the whole of Arabia. The *Sūra* further, referring by implication to the fall of the Roman and Persian Empires, embodies a prophecy about the eventual triumph of Islam over all the religions of the world.

Towards the close of the preceding *Sūra*, believers were given definite promise of victory over their opponents. The present *Sūra* declares in clear and unequivocal terms that the promised victory is not a thing of some indefinite distant future, but is near at hand. It is so near that it may be said to have actually arrived, and it will be so decisive and overwhelming that even the most sceptic will find it hard to deny.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with a firm and unequivocal declaration that the promised victory has actually arrived and that it would be clear, definite, and overwhelming. The Holy Prophet is told that as a result of it people will join the fold of Islam in such large numbers that it would prove a formidable task for him adequately to train and educate the new converts in the tenets and principles of Islam. He should therefore implore God's assistance in the discharge of his onerous duty, and ask for His forgiveness and mercy lest, due to human limitations, some defects should remain in its full execution.

The *Sūra* proceeds to say that because of lack of proper realization of the import of the Treaty of Hudaibiya the believers were downcast, God would send down solace and tranquillity on them and their faith would increase, while the false satisfaction and delight of disbelievers would be short-lived. The believers are further told that they should not have doubted the wisdom of the Prophet's action in signing the Treaty since he was God's Messenger and all his actions were done under His direction and guidance. Their duty was "to believe in him, help him, and honour him".

Further, the *Sūra* says that believers earned the pleasure of God when they swore allegiance to the Prophet under "the tree" that they would stand by him through thick and thin, even unto death. It was God's own plan that fighting did not take place because in Mecca there lived true and sincere Muslims whom believers did not know, and some of whom would have unwittingly been killed, though disbelievers also would certainly have suffered a crushing defeat, since it is God's unalterable law that disbelief should suffer defeat when it is face to face with belief.

Next, the Hypocrites and the laggards-behind receive a severe rebuke and their hypocrisy is exposed. Whenever they are invited to fight in the cause of God, the *Sūra* says, they invent false excuses to justify their tarrying behind, but by their foolish subterfuges they deceive no one but themselves, and their false excuses would not save them from Divine punishment that is in store for them.

Towards the close, the *Sūra* reverts to the subject that not only would the Treaty of Hudaibiya prove a great victory but other victories would also follow in its wake, and the neighbouring countries would fall to the victorious arms of Muslims, because it is decreed in heavens that Islam, being the last Divine Message, should prevail over all religions and mankind should worship one God and follow one Prophet.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.^{3816A}

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Verily, We have granted thee a clear victory,³⁸¹⁷

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا ②

^aSee 1 : 1.

3816A. **Commentary :**

See 1 : 1.

as it forms the principal topic dealt with in the *Sūra* under comment, it needs to be treated at some length.

3817. **Commentary :**

The reference in the words "a clear victory" seems to be to the Treaty of Hudaibiya. It is remarkable that though, during the previous brief six years of his life at Medina, the Holy Prophet had gained great victories over his enemies which had crippled and crushed their fighting power, yet none of them is called "a clear victory" in the Qur'ān. It was reserved for the Treaty of Hudaibiya to receive this signal honour, in spite of the fact that its terms were seemingly so humiliating that the Muslims were greatly perturbed over this apparently rude rebuff to the prestige of Islam, and even a stalwart like 'Umar exclaimed in extreme grief and indignation that had the terms been settled by any other person than the Holy Prophet, he would have scorned to listen to them (Hishām). The Treaty was indeed a great victory in that it opened the way to the expansion and spread of Islam and led to the fall of Mecca and ultimately to the conquest of the whole of Arabia. It proved to be a master-stroke of strategy as the Holy Prophet's "political status as an equal and independent Power was acknowledged by the Quraish" ("Mohammad at Medina" by Montgomery Watt).

As the Treaty of Hudaibiya constitutes a great landmark in the early history of Islam and

The Holy Prophet had seen a vision that he was making a circuit of the Ka'ba along with a party of his followers. In fulfilment of his vision the Prophet started for Mecca with about 1500 Muslims to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage in 6 A.H., in the month of Dhu'l Qa'dah, one of the four sacred months in which, according to Arab tradition and usage, fighting was forbidden, even before Islam. When he reached 'Usfān, a place a few miles distant from Mecca, he was informed by an advance party whom he had sent under the command of 'Abbād bin Bishar' that the Quraish were bent upon barring his entry into Mecca. In order to avoid armed clash the Prophet changed his route and "after a fatiguing march through devious and rugged pathways reached Hudaibiya," where he encamped. The Prophet had declared t'at he would accept all the demands of the Quraish for the honour of the Holy Place (Hishām), but the Quraish were firmly resolved not to allow him to enter Mecca, whatever he might say or do. Messages were exchanged in an attempt to find a solution of the *impasse*. After heated and protracted parleys in which the Holy Prophet left no stone unturned, even at the cost of his prestige, to arrive at a reasonable compromise with the Quraish, a treaty was signed of which the terms were :

3. That Allah may cover up for thee thy shortcomings, past and future, and that He may complete His favour upon thee. and may guide thee on a right path;³⁸¹⁸

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ
وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا^{٣٨١٨}

War shall be suspended for ten years. Whosoever would like to join the Holy Prophet or enter into treaty with him, shall have liberty to do so, and likewise whosoever would like to join the Quraish or enter into treaty with them. If a believing man goes over to the Prophet from Mecca without the permission of his guardian, he shall be sent back to his guardian; but should any of the followers of the Prophet return to the Quraish, they shall not be sent back. The Prophet shall retire this year without entering the city. Next year he and his Companions may visit Mecca only for three days to perform *عمرة* (Lesser Pilgrimage), but they shall carry no arms save sheathed swords (Bukhārī, Hishām & Muir).

The terms of the Treaty were demonstrably very humiliating. The Muslims were greatly upset. No words could adequately describe their grief, and sense of humiliation and injured pride. The third term was particularly galling. But the Holy Prophet was quite calm and tranquil. Being convinced of the moral force of Islam, he knew that "a believer who had once tasted the sweetness of faith would prefer to be cast into fire than to revert to disbelief" (Bukhārī), and that he would be a source of strength to his religion and other believers wherever he might happen to be. The case of Abū Baṣīr, and that of Abū Jandal and their associates fully justified his conviction. He wanted to have a peaceful atmosphere. He knew that a peaceful soil was most congenial for the spread of Islam, and Islam did spread very rapidly after the signing of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiya. When as a result of violation by the Quraish of the terms of

the Treaty, the Prophet marched on Mecca two years later, ten thousand faithful Companions were under his command, instead of the paltry 1500 who were with him on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty. Thus the Treaty and its aftermath gave in advance the direct lie to the false and foolish propaganda, that was to be conducted by Christian Missionaries in our own time, that Islam was propagated by the sword.

One immediate effect of the Treaty was that the tribes of Banū Khuzā'ah entered into an alliance with the Holy Prophet, while the Banū Bakar sided with the Quraish, an incident which later on led to the march on Mecca. The Treaty did indeed prove to be "a clear victory." The Companions of the Holy Prophet were rightly proud of being present on the occasion, and quite justified in regarding the signing of the Treaty, and not the conquest of Mecca as "the victory referred to in the present verse" (Bukhārī). According to them no victory was greater and more far-reaching in its results and effects than this Treaty (Hishām). And the Holy Prophet himself called it a victory (Baihaquī as quoted by Zurqānī).

3818. Important Words :

ليغفر (that He may cover up). They say غفر المتاع *i.e.*, he put the goods into the bag and covered and protected them. مغفرة and غفران both infinitive nouns mean, protection and preservation. مغفر means, helmet and غفارة means, cloth worn beneath the veil to keep it clean (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab). See also 2 : 59 ; 14 : 42 & 40 : 56.

ذنبك (thy shortcomings). ذنبه means, he followed his trail, not quitting his track. ذنب

therefore, signifies such natural failings or frailties as adhere to human nature. **أَذْنَبَ** means, he committed a sin, a crime, a misdemeanour, fault, etc. According to Imām Rāghib **ذَنْبَ** means, such errors and mistakes as bring about a harmful result. It differs from **أَثَمَ** in being either intentional or committed through inadvertence while **أَثَمَ** is peculiarly intentional (Lane). See also 3 : 17.

Commentary :

The verse has been deliberately misrepresented, or, through lack of knowledge of Arabic idiom and phrase, misinterpreted, by Christian Missionaries as signifying that the Holy Prophet was guilty of some moral lapses. But it bears no such construction. It is an article of faith with Muslims, as enjoined by the Qur'ān, that God's Prophets are born sinless and they remain sinless throughout their lives. They are incapable of saying or doing anything contrary to Divine commandments (21 : 28). As they are commissioned by God to purge men of sins, they cannot themselves commit sins. And of Divine Messengers the Holy Prophet was the noblest and the purest. The Qur'ān abounds in verses which speak in glowing terms of the purity and spotlessness of his life. Here are a few of them :

(a) Say, 'If you love Allah, follow me; then will Allah love you (3 : 32). (b) Verily, Allah has conferred a favour on the believers by raising among them a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His Signs, and purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom (3 : 165). (c) Say, my Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds (6 : 163). (d) Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the Immaculate (sinless) One.... (7 : 158). (e) O ye who believe! respond to Allah, and the

Messenger when he (the Messenger) calls you that he may give you life (8 : 25). (f) Verily, you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model (33 : 22). (g) Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee, indeed, swear allegiance to Allah (48 : 11). (h) Your Companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray, nor does he speak out of his own desire (53 : 3-4). (i) And thou dost surely possess very high moral excellences (68 : 5). (j) A noble Messenger, possessor of power, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne, one who should be obeyed and who is faithful to his trust (81 : 20-22).

A man of such high moral stature, as the Holy Prophet, who raised a whole people, sunk into the lowest depths of moral turpitude, to the highest pinnacles of spiritual eminence, could not possibly be guilty of such moral lapses as his detractors seek to impute to him.

A quite simple and harmless word — **ذَنْبَ** — is taken advantage of to malign him. The word, among other things, signifies such frailties as adhere to human nature, and errors as are calculated to bring about harmful results. In this sense of the word the verse signifies that God would protect the Holy Prophet from the harmful results that would follow in the wake of the promised victory referred to in the preceding verse, inasmuch as, large masses of people would enter the fold of Islam, and naturally their moral and spiritual training and upbringing would not be of the desired standard. That is why wherever in the Qur'ān success and victories are promised to the Holy Prophet, he is enjoined to seek protection of God from his **ذَنْبَ** i.e., human weakness which might stand in the way of the realization of his great mission which is the spread and expansion of Islam and the creation of a disciplined community of high morals. The fact that of the four words **جَنَاحَ** and **جَرَمَ** and **أَثَمَ** and **ذَنْبَ**, which possess almost similar connotation,

4. And that Allah may help thee with a mighty help.³⁸¹⁹

وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٨١٩﴾

5. He it is Who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers^a that they might add faith to their faith—^band to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is All-Knowing, Wise—³⁸²⁰

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
لِيَزِدَّهُمْ إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ جُنُودُ
السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣٨٢٠﴾

^a9 : 26. ^b33 : 10 ; 74 : 32.

the first three have not been used in the Qur'an with regard to Prophets of God, shows that ذنب does not possess the sinister meaning which the other three words possess. Besides, according to the Quranic idiom, the expression ذنبك, if at all be taken to signify a sin or crime, would mean "the sins attributed to thee or alleged to have been committed by thee or the sins committed against thee." Elsewhere in the Qur'an (5 : 30) a similar expression اثنى (my sin) means, the sin committed against me. Thus the verse under comment means that as a result of the great victory i.e., the Treaty of Hudaibiya, all the sins and crimes and faults which his enemies imputed to the Holy Prophet, viz., that he was a cheat, an impostor or forger of lies against God and man, etc., would prove to be false, inasmuch as all sorts of people by coming into contact with Muslims would find out the truth about him. Moreover, the context also supports this meaning because grant of a clear victory and the completion of Divine favour upon the Holy Prophet, referred to in this and the preceding verse do not seem to possess any relevance to the forgiveness of sins, if ذنب be taken to mean a sin. And the expression لك may also mean "for thy sake."

The words "past and present" signify that the charges that have been levelled against the Holy Prophet in the past by the Quraish and those that will be levelled against him in

future by his enemies, will all be dispelled and he will stand completely vindicated. The words seem to embody a great prophecy that in some future time the Holy Prophet will be misrepresented and misunderstood but that all misunderstandings will eventually be dissipated and Islam will shine forth in full glory, and its superiority will be established over all rival Faiths.

3819. Commentary :

Allah's help came in the form of the rapid spread of Islam in Arabia after the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiya, and the Holy Prophet was acknowledged as the Head of an independent sovereign State.

3820. Commentary :

Twice, in this Sura has the statement been made that "God sent down tranquillity upon the believers" (see v. 27) and twice the declaration that "to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth." These expressions show that though, due to a misunderstanding about the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiya, the believers were temporarily perturbed, they never lost peace of mind so far as fighting in the cause of Allah was concerned, and were fully convinced that Divine hosts were with them. That is why when a false news reached Hudaibiya that 'Uthmān, the Prophet's envoy to the Meccans, had been killed, and the Prophet invited Muslims to take a solemn oath at his hand that they would avenge

6. That He may make the believing men and the believing women enter the Gardens beneath which streams flow, wherein they will abide, and *that* "He may remove their evils from them—and that, in the sight of Allah, is the supreme triumph—

7. And *that* He may punish the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women^b, and the idolatrous men and the idolatrous women, who entertain evil thoughts concerning Allah. "On them *shall fall* an evil calamity; and the wrath of Allah is upon them. And He has cursed them, and has prepared Hell for them. And that indeed is an evil destination.³⁸²¹

8. "And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.³⁸²²

لِيَدْخُلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفَّرُ عَنْهُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ⑥
وَيُعَذِّبُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَ
الْمُشْرِكَاتِ الظَّالِمِينَ بِاللَّهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ عَلَيْهِمْ دَائِرَةُ
السَّوْءِ وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ
جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ⑦

وَاللَّهُ جُنُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا
حَكِيمًا ⑧

^a8 : 30 ; 64 : 10 ; 66 : 9.

^b33 : 25.

^c9 : 98.

^dSee 48 : 5.

the death of 'Uthmān and would fight under his banner to the bitter end, all of them took the oath without evincing the least hesitation.

3821. Important Words :

دائرة (calamity) is derived from دار which means, it (an event) came about. دار الدهر means, the time took a turn; it changed. دار بينهم الكأس means, the wine-cup went round them. دائرة means, the circuit of a thing; an evil turn of fortune; calamity; defeat; rout; slaughter; death. دارت عليهم الدوائر means, calamities befell them (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that every turn of

fortune adds to the faith of believers and any addition to faith of believers increases the heart-burning and jealousy of disbelievers and the Hypocrites. The latter had entertained the false hope that the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiya would bring about a weakening of faith among the believers but the opposite happened and this caused heart-burning among them.

3822. Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers and Hypocrites that all their evil thoughts and designs against believers would do the latter no harm, because Allah is with them and His hosts are at their back.

9. We have sent thee as a witness and "a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner."^{3822A}

10. That you should believe in Allah and His Messenger, and may help him, and honour him^b, and *that* you may glorify Him morning and evening.

11. Verily, those who swear allegiance to thee indeed swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands. So whoever breaks *his oath*, breaks *it* to his own loss; and whoever fulfils the covenant that he has made with Allah, He will surely give him a great reward.³⁸²³

R. 2 12. Those of the desert Arabs, who *contrived to be* left behind, will say to thee, "Our possessions and our families kept us occupied, so ask forgiveness for us."^d They say with their tongues that which is not in their hearts. Say, "Who can avail you aught against Allah, if He intends you some harm, or if He intends you some benefit? Nay, Allah is Well-Aware of what you do."³⁸²⁴

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۝٩

لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ۝١٠

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَمِيسُورَتُهُ ۖ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝١١

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَبْلُغُ لَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝١٢

^a25 : 57 ; 33 : 46 ; 35 : 25. ^b5 : 13. ^c102 : 2. ^d3 : 168. ^e13 : 17 ; 25 : 4.

3822-A. Commentary :

The verse refers to three attributes of the Holy Prophet. He was شاهد *i.e.*, his whole life constituted a standing testimony to the existence of the Almighty God Who gave him success against very heavy odds. He was مبشر because he gave believers the glad tidings of bliss and benediction in this life as well as in the life to come, and he was نذير (Warner) for those who rejected his Message.

3823. Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the oath taken

by the believers at the hands of the Holy Prophet under a tree at Hudaibiya when a rumour reached him that 'Uthmān, his special envoy, had been killed by the Meccans. The believers were asked to declare on solemn oath that they would stand by the Holy Prophet at all costs and would fight under his banner to the bitter end.

3824. Commentary :

Reference in this verse is to those Bedouin tribes around Medina who apparently had

13. 'Nay, you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never come back to their families, and that was made *to appear* pleasing to your hearts, and you thought an evil thought, and you were a ruined people.'³⁸²⁵

14. And *as for* those who believe not in Allah and His Messenger—"We have surely prepared for the disbelievers a blazing fire.

15. ^bAnd to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. ^cHe forgives whom He pleases, and punishes whom He please. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

بَلْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ
إِلَى أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزُيِّنَ ذَلِكَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَ
كُنْتُمْ ظَنُّ السَّوْءِ ۖ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا ۝١٣

وَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا ۝١٤

وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝١٥

^a18 : 103 ; 29 : 69 ; 33 : 9 ; 76 : 5. ^b40 : 17. ^c3 : 130 ; 5 : 19.

friendly relations with the Muslims. These tribes were also invited to join the party of 1500 Muslims who were going to Mecca to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage (عمرة). Though the Prophet was going on a mission of peace, these desert tribes thought that the Quraish would not allow his entry into Mecca and that in all likelihood there would be a clash of arms and Muslims not being properly armed would be defeated, and therefore going with the Holy Prophet was tantamount to marching into the jaws of death (Muir, Hishām & Kathīr). The verse may equally apply to those tribes who had remained behind in the expedition to Tabūk because analogous words

have been used in *Sūra Al-Tauba* about them.

3825. Commentary :

Wish being father to the thought, the Hypocrites, whenever invited by the Prophet to join him in an expedition, entertained the fond hope that Muslims being very weak would never come back safe to their families. Therefore, on one pretext or another, they requested to be excused. But their wishful thinking, says the verse, always ended in frustration and severe disappointment, and the Muslims returned successful from almost every expedition.

16. Those who *contrived to be* left behind will say, when you go forth to the spoils to take them, 'Let us follow you.' They seek to change the decree of Allah. Say, 'You shall not follow us. Thus has Allah said beforehand.' Then they will say, 'Nay, but you envy us.' Not so; *in fact* they understand not except a little.³⁸²⁶

سَيَقُولُ الْخَلْفُونَ إِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَائِمٍ
لِنَأْخُذْ وَهَآذِرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ
يُبَدِّلُوا كَلِمَ اللَّهِ قُلْ لَنْ تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكُمْ قَالَ
اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا بَلْ
كَاُنُوا لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ①٦

17. Say to the desert Arabs who *contrived to be* left behind, 'You shall be called to *fight* against a people of mighty valour; you shall fight them until they surrender. Then, if you obey, Allah will give you a good reward, but if you turn your backs, as you turned your backs before, He will punish you with a painful punishment.'³⁸²⁷

قُلْ لِلْخَلَفَيْنِ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعُونَ إِلَى
قَوْمٍ أُولَىٰ بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلَمُونَ
فَإِنْ تَطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا وَإِنْ
تَتَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا
أَلِيمًا ①٧

3826. Commentary :

The reference in the words, "When you go forth to the spoils that you take them," is to the booty which fell into the hands of Muslims in the Khaibar expedition. The *Sūra* under comment was revealed to the Prophet when he was on his way back from Hudaibiya. In v. 20, the Muslims have been promised great spoils. It is to these spoils that the present verse refers. Having returned from Hudaibiya, the Prophet, after a short stay at Medina, marched against the Jews of Khaibar to punish them for their repeated acts of treachery. Those Bedouin tribes who had contrived to remain behind when the Prophet went to Mecca for the Lesser Pilgrimage, finding that his cause had prospered and that they would have a good share of the booty if they joined the expedition to Khaibar, requested the Prophet to be allowed to accompany

the Muslim army. They were told that they could not do so as the promise of booty was made only to those sincere Muslims who were with the Holy Prophet at Hudaibiya.

3827. Commentary :

The words "a people of mighty valour," may refer to the mighty forces of the Byzantine and Iranian Empires which were far superior in means, material and numbers than any other enemy the Muslims had met so far. The verse constituted a warning that the Muslims would come into conflict with those mighty foes and would have to wage prolonged wars with them till the latter were broken and brought to their knees. The laggards are thus told that though they cannot be allowed to march against the Jews of Khaibar and partake of the booty, yet in the near future they would be

18. "There is no blame on the blind, nor is there blame on the lame, nor is there blame on the sick, *if they go not forth to fight*.^b And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will make him enter the Gardens beneath which streams flow; but whoso turns his back, him will He punish with a grievous punishment.^{3827A}

- 3 19. Surely, Allah was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing allegiance to thee under the Tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquillity on them, and He rewarded them with a victory at hand.³⁸²⁸

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ
وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْيُومِ حَرَجٌ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ يَدْخُلْهُ جَنَّتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا^{١٨}
لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ
الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَتَاهُمُ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا^{١٩}

^a9 : 91. ^b4 : 14 ; 24 : 53 ; 33 : 72.

called upon to fight against a much more powerful foe and, if they then responded to the call, they would receive a good reward. The verse also signifies that wars with the Byzantine and Iranian Empires would be fierce and long.

3827-A. Commentary :

The disbelievers have repeatedly been threatened with "a grievous and burning punishment," in the *Sūra*. This is to warn them that the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiya over which they and their fellows had gloated, would prove for them an abiding source of ignominious heart-burning.

3828. Commentary :

The swearing of allegiance referred to in the verse took place at Hudaibiya under an acacia tree after a report had reached the Holy Prophet that in breach of ambassadorial usage or etiquette his envoy, 'Uthmān, had been killed at Mecca. It was, perhaps, not so much the reported murder of 'Uthmān as the violation of a sacred and time-honoured custom

that exhausted the Prophet's patience. He invited his followers to take a solemn oath at his hand that they would fight the Quraish to the last breath of their lives. The oath came to be known as *bai'at al-Riḍwān*, which signified that those lucky people who had taken the oath had obtained God's pleasure.

The words, "He knew what was in their hearts," mean that God was well conversant with the state of their minds, *viz.*, that they were quite honest and sincere in their oaths and were anxious to vindicate their sincerity with their blood.

What greater proof could there be that "God sent down tranquillity on Muslims," than that, being only about 1500 in number and being far away from home, friendless and surrounded by hostile tribes and faced by a powerful enemy who was entrenched in his citadel, the Muslims were prepared to fight rather than agree to the proposed terms of the Treaty. The expression, "He rewarded them with a victory near at hand" refers to the victory of Khaibar. On his return from Hudaibiya the Prophet led an expedition

20. And great spoils that they will take. Allah is Mighty, Wise.³⁸²⁹

وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا

حَكِيمًا ٣٠

21. Allah has promised you great spoils that you will take, and He has given you this in advance, and has "restrained the hands of men from you, that it may be a Sign for the believers, and that He may guide you on a right path."³⁸³⁰

وَعَدَكُمْ اللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا فَجَعَلَ

لَكُمْ هَذِهِ وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنْكُمْ وَلِتَكُونَ

آيَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ٣١

45 : 12.

against the Jews of Khaibar (a great hot-bed of Jewish intrigue and conspiracy) with those Muslims who were with him at Hudaibiya. Judged by worldly standards of political strategy, and in view of the apparently humiliating terms of the Treaty and of the feeling of frustration that some of the Companions felt at those terms, the Holy Prophet should have been a beaten and embittered man, yet God has styled the Treaty "a clear victory" (v. 2), "a grand achievement" (v. 6); "a mighty reward" (v. 11); and "the completion and perfection of His favour on the Prophet" (v. 3). What was it that made this "humiliating" Treaty such a significant event in the annals of Islam? The answer is: Because it opened the flood-gates of spiritual and political conquests for Islam. The signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiya was immediately followed by the conquest of Khaibar, a Jewish stronghold and a source of great danger and anxiety for Muslims. Besides, the Islamic Republic at Medina came to be recognized as an independent sovereign State, and within the brief space of three or four years the whole of Arabia was at the feet of the Holy Prophet, followed by a chain of victories which culminated in the defeat and destruction of the great and powerful Byzantine and Iranian Empires.

3829. Commentary :

"Great Spoils" may refer to the great gains which the Muslims got as a result of the "near victory" promised in the preceding verse.

The repeated mention in the *Sūra* of the Divine attributes "Mighty," "Wise" and "Powerful over all things" seems to signify that the seemingly humiliating Treaty of Hudaibiya proved a source of great power for Muslims, as it had been signed by the Prophet in obedience to God's command Who is Mighty, Wise and Powerful.

3830. Commentary :

"Great Spoils" mentioned here may refer to the great booty which fell into the hands of Muslims in the conquests which followed the victory at Khaibar, in the rest of Arabia and the neighbouring countries, but the words "He has given you this in advance," evidently refer to the spoils gained at Khaibar. The words *هذه لكم* may also signify the good things of the present life. The words, "has restrained the hands of men from you", mean that the Treaty of Hudaibiya had ushered in a period of peace for Muslims.

22. And *He has promised you* another victory, which you have not yet achieved, but Allah has surely compassed it. And Allah has power over all things.³⁸³¹

23. And if those who disbelieve should fight you, they would certainly turn their backs; then they would find neither protector nor helper.³⁸³²

24. "Such has ever been the law of Allah; and thou shalt not find any change in the law of Allah."³⁸³³

25. And He it is Who withheld their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Mecca, after He had given you victory over them. And Allah sees all that you do.³⁸³⁴

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ اللَّهُ بِهَا
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٢﴾

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوْا الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا
يُجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٢٣﴾

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ
لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ
عَنْهُمْ بِطَنْ مَكَّةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٥﴾

١٧ : ٧٨ ; ٣٣ ; ٦٣ ; ٣٥ : ٤٤.

3831. Commentary :

The verse embodies a prophecy that Muslims will achieve other great victories after the victory of Khaibar.

3832. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that wherever true believers will stand facing disbelievers in battle array, the disbelievers would suffer defeat. The verse may also mean that if fighting had broken out at Hudaibiya the disbelievers would certainly have suffered defeat.

3833. Commentary :

The verse means that it has always been the law of God that truth must ultimately triumph and falsehood suffer defeat; and God's

law knows no change. This fact is writ large on the face of human history.

3834. Commentary :

The words "after He had given you victory over them," may signify that in view of the circumstances in which the Muslims were then placed and of the far-reaching results it produced, the Treaty of Hudaibiya was tantamount to a great victory. The words may also refer to the victories that God had granted to Muslims before they came to Hudaibiya—the victory at Badr, the safe return of Muslims and the Holy Prophet to Medina from Uḥud after they had been placed in a very dangerous and delicate situation, and the complete frustration of the Meccans in their evil designs to destroy Islam in the Battle of the Ditch when they were repulsed with severe loss, etc. In a sense these were all victories of believers over disbelievers.

26. It is they who disbelieved and ^ahindered you from the Sacred Mosque and ^bthe offering which was prevented from reaching its place of sacrifice. And had it not been for *some* believing men and believing women whom you knew not and whom you might have trampled down unwittingly, so that blame might have attached to you on their account, *He would have permitted you to fight but He withheld you* that He might admit into His mercy whom He will. If they had been separated from the disbelievers, we would have surely punished those of them who disbelieved with a grievous punishment.³⁸³⁵

هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
وَالْهَدْيِ مَعْكُوفًا أَنْ يَبْلُغَ حِمْلَهُ وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ
مُؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاءٌ مُؤْمِنَاتٌ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ
تَطُوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعَرَّةٌ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
لِيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا
لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا^{٣٨٣٥}

^a8 : 35 ; 16 : 89 ; 22 : 26 ; 43 : 38. ^b2 : 197.

3835. Important Words :

معرة (blame) is derived from عر ('arra). They say عرت الابل i.e., the camels were or became mangy or scabby. عره means, he did to him an abominable thing; he did to him what he disliked; he disgraced him. عره بشر means, he aspersed him or charged or upbraided him with evil, or he wronged him. معرة means, a cause of reviling or being reviled; a crime or sin that is noxious like mange or scab; a foul or abominable thing; a cause of grief or vexation; disgrace; annoyance, hurt, harm or injury (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that though the Meccans gloated over the terms of the Treaty

of Hudaibiya which, in their ignorance, they thought were very advantageous to them and humiliating for Muslims, and though the latter feeling that the terms were being forcibly wrung from them were crest-fallen and did not know that in reality the terms had laid the foundations of a very prosperous and bright future for Islam, yet God had His own design in not permitting the fight to take place. There was a nucleus of Muslims in Mecca and if the fight had taken place, Muslim army would have unknowingly killed their own brethren in Faith, thereby causing great injury to their own cause, and earning obloquy and opprobrium for themselves. In fact, from whatever angle the Treaty of Hudaibiya may be viewed it was indeed a great victory.

27. When those who disbelieved harboured in their hearts prideful indignation, the indignation of the Days of Ignorance, "Allah sent down His tranquillity on His Messenger and on the believers, and made them adhere firmly to the principle of righteousness, and they were better entitled to it and more worthy of it. And Allah knows everything full well."³⁸³⁶

- 4 28. Surely, has Allah fulfilled for His Messenger the vision. You shall certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah will, in security, some having *their* heads shaven and *others* having *their* hair cut short, and you will have no fear. But He knew what you knew not. He has, in fact, ordained for you, besides that, a victory near at hand.³⁸³⁷

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ
الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَ
عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالَزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى وَكَانُوا
أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ۝

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّءْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ
الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ
رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ
تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ۝

49 : 26.

3836. Important Words :

حمية (prideful indignation) is inf. noun from حمى which means, he refused to bear or endure or tolerate wrongful treatment. They say حمى عنه او منه i.e., he was ashamed, and he disdained or scorned to do it. حمى عليه means, he was angry with him. حمية (syn. أنفة and غيرة) means, disdain, scorn or indignation ; jealousy; indignation which is the result of a feeling of pride (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that against their own tradition and usage that access to, and the circuit of, the Ka'ba was not to be prevented in the four Sacred Months, the pagans of Mecca, from a false sense of dignity and national pride, had made it a point of honour with them not to allow Muslims to enter Mecca and perform the

Lesser Pilgrimage (عمرة). But "Allah sent His tranquillity" upon the Muslims and though they were greatly upset over the seemingly humiliating terms of the Treaty, yet in deference to the command of their noble Master they bore it all with becoming restraint and patience and did not abandon the path of rectitude and righteousness under the most severe provocation. The Companions of the Holy Prophet alone were capable of setting such a noble example.

3837. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet had seen a vision that he was performing the circuit of the Ka'ba with his Companions (Bukhārī). The Prophet set out for Mecca with about 1500 of his Companions to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage. It is to this "vision" that the verse under comment refers. The Prophet was not allowed access

29. "He it is Who has sent His Messenger, with guidance and the Religion of tuth, that He may make it prevail over *all other* religions. And sufficient is Allah as a Witness.³⁸³⁸

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ
لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ۝٢٩

^a61 : 10. ^b4 : 167 ; 6 : 20 ; 13 : 44; 29 : 53.

to the Ka'ba by the Quraish. On the contrary, he had to sign a treaty of which the terms as mentioned above seemed to be very humiliating and hurtful to the Muslims' self-respect. They were highly upset, the illustrious 'Umar, more than any one else, not only at the terms, but also at the fact that the vision as he understood it had not been fulfilled, could not understand how the Prophet's journey had served its purpose. He was not quite satisfied with the explanation that the vision did not signify that the Pilgrimage would be performed that very year. He was in this frame of mind when, on the way back to Medina, this *Sūra* was revealed and the Prophet called for him and recited it to him. The *Sūra* was clear and emphatic that the Prophet's vision was true and that the Muslims would most certainly enter the Ka'ba and perform the ceremonies of the Lesser Pilgrimage. The Prophet's journey,

besides serving other useful purposes to which reference is already made, established an important precedent that sometimes even great Prophets of God are liable to place seemingly erroneous interpretations on their visions.

3838. Commentary :

In the preceding verse reference was made to the vision of the Holy Prophet which had brought about the Treaty of Hudaibiya which in turn led to the very rapid expansion of Islam in Arabia and to its consolidation, and ultimately to the fall of Mecca and the submission of the whole of Arabia to the Holy Prophet. The present verse makes a very bold prophecy to the effect that not only would Islam prevail in Arabia but would also eventually triumph over all other religions. The signs of the fulfilment of this prophecy are already in evidence.

30. Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are "hard against the disbelievers and tender among themselves. Thou seest them bowing and prostrating themselves in Prayer, seeking Allah's grace and pleasure. Their mark is upon their faces, being the traces of prostrations. This is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is like unto a seed-produce that sends forth its sprout, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and stands firm on its stem, delighting the sowers—that He may cause the disbelievers to burn with rage at the sight of them. Allah has promised, unto those of them who believe and do good works, forgiveness and a great reward.³⁸³⁹

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ
رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيَاهُهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ
أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ
فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ تَفْحٌ كَزَّرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْطَهُ فَازْرَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ
فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سَوْقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزَّادِعَ لِيُغَيِّظَ بِهِمُ
الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
مِنْهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ٣٩

a9 : 123.

b59 : 9.

3839. Important Words :

أَشِدَّاءُ (hard) is the plural of شَدِيدٌ which is derived from شَدَّ which means, he was or became strong. شَدَّ عَلَى عَدُوِّهِ means, he attacked his enemy. شَدِيدٌ means, firm or firm of heart; strong; compact; powerful; robust; courageous; brave; keen or tenacious; niggardly; avaricious; exalted (Lane & Aqrab).

سِيَاهٌ (mark) is derived from سَوَّمَ (sawwama). They say سَوَّمَ الْفَرَسَ i.e. he put a mark upon the horse; he put the mark with iron such as is used for branding or with something whereby he should be known. سِيَاهٌ or سَوْمَةٌ means, a mark, sign or token or badge by which a thing is known or by which the good is known from the bad (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The preceding verse had made a great prophecy about the eventual triumph of Islam over all other religious systems. The verse under

comment signifies that the foundations of the grand and glorious future of Islam have already been laid by "Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him," and mentions some of the noble qualities of good and sincere believers, through whose selfless efforts this consummation will be brought about. They are brave, firm and courageous and not susceptible to the evil influences of bad persons and environment; on the contrary, they are loving and kind towards each other. These are the two essential characteristics of a progressive and rising people who seek to leave their mark on the course of world events. Elsewhere in the Qur'an (5 : 55) the true and good Muslims have been described as أَدْلَةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ i.e. kind and humble towards believers and hard and firm against disbelievers.

The words, "this is their description in the Torah," may refer to the Biblical description,

viz., "he shined forth from mount Paran and he came with ten thousands of saints" (Deut. 33 : 2). And the expression, "and their description in the Gospel is like unto a seed-produce" may refer to another Biblical parable, *viz.*, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed seeds some fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Matt. 13 : 3—8). The former description seems

to apply to the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the latter parable to the followers of Jesus's counterpart, the Promised Messiah, who, from very small and insignificant beginning, are destined to develop into a mighty organization and gradually but progressively to carry the Message of Islam to the ends of the earth till it will prevail and triumph over all religions, and its opponents will wonder at, and be jealous of, its power and prestige.

CHAPTER 49

AL-HUJURĀT

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Context, and Date of Revelation

By common consent this is a Medinite *Sūra*. It was revealed in the 9th year of *Hijra*, after the fall of Mecca. The *Sūra* takes its title from its 5th verse in which calling out to the Holy Prophet from behind the *Hujurāt* (private compartments) has been strongly condemned, since shouting out to him is bad manners and is also likely to intrude upon his privacy and precious time.

As with the fall of Mecca Islam had become a great political power, and large masses of people had entered its fold, the *Sūra* was revealed to teach good manners and morals to the newly-initiated people. The *Sūra* also deals with some social evils which find their way into a materially-advanced and wealthy society (the Muslims had become such a society after the conquest of Arabia), and speaks of the accession to Islam of great political power and material wealth. Naturally, the *Sūra* also embodies regulations for the settlement of international disputes.

Summary of Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with strict injunctions to Muslims to show full regard and respect to the Holy Prophet which befits his station as a Divine Messenger. They are also enjoined not to anticipate his decisions but to give unquestioning obedience to his commands. They are further enjoined not to raise their voices above his voice; this not only constitutes bad manners but also shows lack of proper respect which is calculated to undermine discipline in the Muslim Community.

The *Sūra* then warns Muslims to be on their guard against giving credence to false rumours, as such rumours, if readily accepted as true, without being subjected to sifting and searching examination, are calculated to land Muslims into very awkward situations. It further lays down, in brief words, rules, on which, if carried out with sincere intent and honest motives, a League of Nations or a United Nations Organisation can be built on sound and solid foundations. Next, the *Sūra*, mentions some social evils which, if not effectively checked in time, eat into the vitals of a community and undermine its whole social structure. Of these social evils the common ones are suspicion, false accusation, spying, back-biting, and the most pronounced and far-reaching in its evil consequences, *viz.*, conceit and pride born of a false sense of racial superiority. The Qur'ān recognizes no basis of superiority save that of piety and righteous conduct.

The *Sūra* ends on the note that true and sincere belief is a Divine favour and the test of a true believer lies in the fact that if once he has given his allegiance to a noble cause, he strives with his whole being to promote it.

سُورَةُ الْحُجُرَاتِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁸⁴⁰

2. O ye who believe! be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Messenger, but fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.³⁸⁴¹

3. O ye who believe! raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him, as you speak aloud to one another, lest your works become vain while you perceive not.³⁸⁴²

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ

وَرَسُولِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ②

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ

صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ

بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ

لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ③

^aSee 1:1.

3840. **Commentary :**

See 1:1.

3841. **Commentary :**

Mecca had fallen. The whole of Arabia lay prostrate at the Prophet's feet. Life had become quite safe and secure for Muslims and wealth and great riches had come into their possession. A life of ease and comfort generally follows in the wake of riches, resulting in lack of discipline and other very serious social evils. Therefore rules of conduct have been revealed in this *Sūra* to safeguard the Muslim Community

against these evils. They are told to show proper respect and regard for the Holy Prophet and to give him unqualified obedience and not to anticipate his commands or to prefer their own wishes to his.

3842. **Commentary :**

The verse lays great stress on observing an attitude of utmost respectfulness towards the Holy Prophet. The Muslims should not talk loudly in his presence or address him aloud. This is not only bad manners but is calculated to do moral injury to one so rude as not to show respect due to the Leader.

4. Verily, those who lower their voices in the presence of the Messenger of Allah—those are they whose hearts Allah has purified for righteousness. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.³⁸⁴³

5. Those who shout out to thee from without *thy private* apartments—most of them lack understanding.³⁸⁴⁴

6. And if they had waited patiently until thou came out to them it would be better for them. But Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

7. O ye who believe! if an unrighteous person brings you any news, "investigate it fully, lest you harm a people in ignorance, and then be repentant for what you have done."³⁸⁴⁵

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَعْضُونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ينادُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٧﴾

4 : 95

3843. Important Words :

مح من فلانا is derived from محن. They say, محن فلانا i.e., he tried or put to the test such a one. محنه عشرين سوطا means, he flogged him with twenty stripes. محن الفضة means, he purified the silver by putting it in the fire. محن البئر means, he took out the earth from the well and cleared it (Tāj & Rāghib).

Commentary :

To speak in low tones in the presence of the Prophet is indicative of respect for him and of one's own humility of heart which is a good moral quality; while unnecessarily raising of voice smacks of conceit and arrogance.

3844. Commentary :

Calling out to the Prophet in a loud voice

from outside his house amounts to intruding upon his privacy and shows lack of respect for his person and for his valuable time ; and only an ill-mannered person would be guilty of such foolish behaviour.

3845. Commentary :

Though after the fall of Mecca, at the time when this *Sūra* was revealed, almost the whole of Arabia had entered the fold of Islam, some tribes still refused to accept the new order of things and were determined upon fighting the Muslims to the bitter end. Moreover, the neighbouring Byzantine and Persian Empires were awakening to a realization of the challenge to their power which they thought had arisen in Arabia, and war with Islam seemed

8. And know that among you is the Messenger of Allah; if he were to comply with your wishes in most matters, you would surely come to trouble; but Allah has endeared the faith to you and "has made it look beautiful to your hearts, and He has made disbelief, wickedness and disobedience hateful to you. Such indeed are those who follow the right course.³⁸⁴⁶

9. Through the grace and favour of Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

10. And if two parties of believers fight each other, make peace between them; then if *after that* one of them transgresses against the other, fight the party that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah. Then if it returns, make peace between them with equity, and act justly. Verily, Allah loves the just.³⁸⁴⁷

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي
كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ
وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الرُّشْدُونَ ﴿٨﴾

فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلَحُوا
بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَجَارِعَا
الَّذِي يَنْبَغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيَّ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ
فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

6 : 109.

b8 : 2.

inevitable. So the direction embodied in the verse under comment was necessary. The Muslims are told that even when the exigencies of war necessitate prompt action to forestall a military move on the enemy's part, rumours which are naturally very much rife in time of war should not be given ready credence. They should be tested and their correctness ascertained before action is taken upon them.

3846. Commentary :

The verse continues the general theme of the *Sūra*, the immediately preceding verse constituting a necessary parenthesis. In the earlier verses the Muslims were enjoined to give unquestioning obedience to the Holy Prophet and

to show respect to him which befitted his station as God's great Prophet. In this verse they are told that the Prophet would seek their counsel in matters concerning them but he should not be expected to follow their advice as he received guidance from on high and because also his was the final responsibility, and their judgment, at best, might be defective. It was enough for them that God, through His Grace, "has endeared faith to you."

3847. Commentary :

The central theme of the *Sūra* is the solidarity of Islam. Directions and rules of conduct which are calculated to achieve and maintain this solidarity have been laid down in it in

11. Surely *all* believers are brothers. So make peace between your brothers, and fear Allah that mercy may be shown to you.³⁸⁴⁸

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

some detail. Some of these rules have been mentioned in the preceding verses, others follow in the verses that come later. A great danger to the security and solidarity of the Muslim State or Community are the disputes and quarrels that haply might arise between different Muslim groups or parties. The verse under comment provides a most effective remedy to compose these quarrels. Primarily, the verse deals with the settlement of disputes between Muslim parties, but it equally embodies a sound basis on which a really effective "League of Nations" or a "United Nations Organization" can be built. The verse lays down the following principles for the maintenance of international peace.

As soon as there are indications of disagreement between two nations, the other nations, instead of taking sides with one or the other, should at once serve notice upon them, calling upon them to submit their differences for settlement to a "League of Nations" or "United Nations Organization," as the case may be. If they agree, the dispute will be amicably settled. But if one of them refuses to submit to the "League," or having submitted refuses to accept the award of the "League," and prepares to make war, the other nations should all fight it. It is evident that one nation, however strong, cannot withstand the united might of all other

nations and is bound to make a speedy submission. In that event, terms of peace should be settled between the two original parties to the dispute. The other nations should act merely as mediators and not as parties to the dispute, and should not put forward new claims arising out of the conflict with the refractory nation, for that would lay the foundation of fresh disputes and quarrels. The terms of peace should be just and equitable with reference to the merits of the dispute; they should be confined to the original dispute between the parties and should not be allowed to travel beyond it.

It is only such a "League" or "Organization" which can safely be entrusted with the maintenance of international peace, not a League or Organization whose very existence is dependent upon the goodwill of others.

3848. **Commentary :**

The verse lays special stress on Islamic Brotherhood. Islam tolerates no discord or dissensions between brothers. If there happens to arise a quarrel or dispute between two Muslim individuals or groups, other Muslims are bound at once to bring about reconciliation between the quarrelling parties. Islam's real strength lies in this ideal of brotherhood which transcends all barriers of caste, colour or clime.

- R. 2 12. O ye who believe! let not one people deride *another* people, haply they may be better than they, nor let women deride *other* women, haply they may be better than they. "And defame not your own people, nor call *one another* by nick-names. Bad *indeed* is evil reputation after *the profession of belief*; and those who repent not, such are the wrong-doers.³⁸⁴⁹

13. O ye who believe! avoid much suspicion^b; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not, neither back-bite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? Certainly you would loathe it. And fear Allah, surely, Allah is Oft-Returning *with compassion and is Merciful*.³⁸⁵⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ
أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ
أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا
تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْإِسْمُ الْفُسُوقِ بَعْدَ
الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ
بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعضُكُمْ
بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ
أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

^a68 : 12; 104 : 2. ^b10 : 67; 53 : 29.

3849. Important Words :

لمز (defame not) is derived from لمزوا. They say لمزه i.e., he made a sign to him with the eye, or the like, as the head, and the lip, with low speech. This is the original signification; according to some other authorities the primary signification of the expression is : (1) he pushed him or impelled him or repelled him or he struck or beat him; (2) he blamed, upbraided, or reproached him; he found fault with him; or he did so in his face; or he spoke evil of him; or spoke of him in a manner that he disliked, mentioning vices or faults as chargeable to him, either behind his back or in his face, though it might be with truth (Lane, Aqrab & Rāghib). See also 104 : 2.

لا تنابروا (call not by nick-names) is derived

from ليز which means, he called him by a surname or nick-name and is syn. with لقبه (laqqaba), mostly signifying, he called him by a nick-name, or a name of reproach or an opprobrious appellation. It also signifies, he upbraided or reproached him; or the like, being syn. with لمزه (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See next verse.

3850. Commentary :

As stated above the principal theme of the *Sūra* is the establishment of concord, amity and goodwill between Muslim individuals and groups and therefore it has mentioned some of those social evils which cause discord, dissensions and differences, and corrode, corrupt and conta-

14. O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.³⁸⁵¹

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى
وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ
أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٤﴾

minate a society, eating into its vitals, and enjoins Muslims to be on their guard against them. Ridiculing and taunting others, spying, and calling by nick-names, and suspicion and back-biting are some of these social evils. Women have been particularly mentioned here in that they are more prone to fall a victim to these evils. The main cause, which lies at the root of these evils, is conceit and a false sense of superiority, which the next verse expressly deals with. By removing the basic causes of disharmony and disagreement among Muslims the *Sūra* has laid the foundation of a firm and solid Brotherhood of Islam.

3851. Important Words :

شُعُوبًا (tribes) is the plural of شَعْب (sha'ba) which is inf. noun from شَعِبَ (sha'aba) which means, he collected, brought together or united; or he separated, put asunder; divided or separated. شَعْب means, a great tribe; the parent of the tribes called قَبَائِل, to which they refer their origin and which comprises them; a nation; a people; a cleft or crack (Lane & Aqrab).

قَبَائِل (sub-tribes) is the plural of قَبِيلَة which is derived from قَبِلَ which means, he accepted; he took or received willingly. قَبِيلَة means, a tribe; a sub-tribe; a family; a body of men from one father or mother (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

From the subject of Islamic Brotherhood to

which reference has been made in the preceding two verses, the *Sūra* proceeds to lay down, in the verse under comment, the basis of an all-comprehensive, all pervading brotherhood of man. The verse, in fact, constitutes the Magna Carta of human fraternity and equality. It has firmly laid the axe at the false and foolish notions of superiority, born of racial arrogance or national conceit. All men having been "created from a male and a female" as human beings have been declared equal in the sight of God. The worth of a man is not to be judged by the pigment of his skin, the amount of wealth he possesses or by his rank or social status, descent or pedigree, but by his moral greatness and the way in which he discharges his obligations to God and man. The whole human race is but one family. Division into tribes, nations, and races is meant to give them a better knowledge of one another, in order that they might benefit from one another's national characteristics and good qualities. This, according to Islam, is the criterion of a person's greatness and this is the only true and real criterion. The Holy Prophet explained the beautiful idea of the brotherhood of man inculcated in this verse in his own inimitable way on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage at Mecca, a short time before his death. Addressing a vast concourse of Muslims the Prophet said, "O ye men! Your God is One and your ancestor is one. An Arab possesses no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab over an Arab. A white is in no way superior to a red, nor, for that matter,

15. The Arabs of the desert say, 'We believe.' Say, "You have not believed *yet*, but rather say, 'We have submitted, for *true* belief has not yet entered into your hearts.'" But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not detract anything from your deeds. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.³⁸⁵²

16. "The believers are only those who *truly* believe in Allah and His Messenger, and then doubt not, but strive with their possessions and their persons in the cause of Allah. It is they who are truthful."³⁸⁵³

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَكِنْ
قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ
وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ
شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ①٥

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ
لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ①٦

49: 20; 61: 12.

a red to a white, but only to the extent to which he discharges his duty to God and man. The most honoured among you in the sight of God is the most righteous among you" (Baihaqī). These noble words spoken by the Prophet during his Farewell Pilgrimage which have resounded through the centuries epitomize one of Islam's loftiest ideals and strongest principles. It goes to the credit of the Holy Prophet that in a society riven with class distinction, he preached a message intensely democratic.

3852. Important Words :

أَلَت (will not detract) is derived from أَلَت which means, it (a thing) decreased, diminished, lessened; it became defective or deficient; incomplete or imperfect. أَلَتْهُ أَوْ لَتْهُ حَقُّهُ means, he diminished to him his right or due or defrauded him of a portion of it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

All Muslims form an integral part of Islamic

Brotherhood. Islam confers equal rights on the unlettered and uncultured sons of the desert as it does on the civilized and cultured dwellers of cities and towns; only it exhorts the former to make greater efforts to learn and assimilate the teachings of Islam and make them the rule of their lives.

3853. Commentary :

True and sincere belief to which reference has been made in the preceding verse consists of three important ingredients—strong and firm faith in Allah, absolute freedom from doubt and misgiving as to the truth of Islam and striving with all means within one's power in the cause of God. It is only those sincere and steadfast Muslims who possess these qualifications who are entitled to be called "the truthful ones" *i.e.*, those who have fulfilled their pledged word to God.

17. Say, "Will you acquaint Allah with your faith, while ^bAllah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and Allah knows all things full well?"

قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمٌ ⑩

18. They deem it as a favour to thee that they have embraced Islam Say, 'Deem not your embracing Islam a favour unto me. On the contrary,^c Allah has bestowed a favour upon you in that He has guided you to the *true* Faith, if you are truthful.'³⁸⁵⁴

يَسْتَوُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَتَّبِعُوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُمْ
بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ
كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ⑪

19. Verily, ^dAllah knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth. And Allah sees all what you do.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ⑫

^a10 : 19.

^b20 : 8; 22 : 71; 27 : 66.

^c3 : 165.

^d11 : 124; 16 : 78.

3854. **Commentary :**

True and sincere faith is the most precious possession of a Muslim. By accepting Islam he

does on favour to anybody; on the contrary, it is a favour of God that one is guided to the Truth.

CHAPTER 50

QĀF

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūra* is of Meccan origin. All competent authorities assign its revelation to the early Meccan period. Its tenor and contents support this view.

The *Sūra* is the first of a group of seven Chapters which end with *Sūra Alwāqiah*. Like all Meccan *Sūrās*, it lays special stress, in emphatic and prophetic language, on the Qur'ān being the revealed Word of God, on Resurrection being an undoubted reality, and particularly on the ultimate triumph of the cause of Islam. The *Sūra* points to the phenomena of nature and to the histories of the past Prophets as guides leading to this inevitable conclusion. The *Sūra* takes its title from its initial abbreviated letter ق (Qāf).

The preceding two *Sūrās* had dealt with the prospects of a great and glorious future for Islam, and also with the social and political problems that arise when power and wealth come to a people. The present *Sūra* having the abbreviated letter ق (Qāf) in its beginning, points to the fact that the Almighty God has the power to make the weak and disorganized Arabs into a powerful nation, and that He will certainly bring about this consummation, using the Qur'ān as the means and instrument for achieving that purpose.

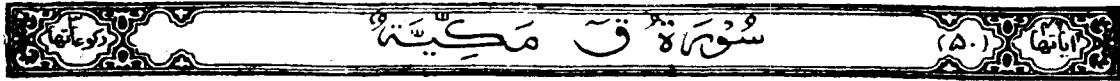
Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the abbreviated letter Qāf (ق) which is the last of the مقطعات (abbreviated letters) used in the Qur'ān. It represents the Divine attribute قادر or قدير (Qādir or Qadīr) meaning, the Mighty, the Powerful, and at once starts to deal with the all-important subject of Resurrection; and in order to prove the truth of this primal fact uses as an argument the phenomenon that a people, who for long centuries were spiritually dead and defunct, received a new and vigorous life through the Qur'ān. The *Sūra* proceeds to say that the Holy Prophet's enemies cannot bring themselves to accept the fact of a Warner appearing from among them to tell them that they will be raised to life after "they are dead and have become dust." They are told to study the wonderful creation of the celestial firmament with the beautiful stars and planets which adorn it and which work with a regularity and punctuality that knows no deviation. They are further told to ponder over the creation of the vast expanse of earth which grows all sorts of fruits and foods for its dwellers. The Author and Architect of this great and complex universe, the *Sūra* says, possesses the power and wisdom to give man a new life after his physical habitat has disintegrated.

Next, the *Sūra* points to the purposefulness of the creation of man—God's supreme creature and His noblest handiwork—and to man's freedom and complete responsibility and

accountability for his actions, in a life after death, wherein he will be punished or rewarded according to the good or bad life he might have led in this world. Those who had wasted their lives in the quest of evil pursuits would be thrown into Hell, the punishments of which would be the representations of their evil deeds done in this life. And so would the rewards of Paradise be the representations of the good and noble actions of the righteous and the God-fearing in this life. Only the things of the next world would be of a nature different from those to which we are accustomed in this life.

The *Sūra* ends on the note that the creation of the universe, and of man—the apex and acme of creation—shows that the wise Creator could not have brought into existence this complex universe without a great purpose behind it. This leads to the conclusion that there must be and there is a life beyond the grave and that all Divine Messengers and Prophets were raised to teach man this important religious doctrine, and that those who refuse to believe in this Divine mission of the Prophets incur a liability in the Hereafter.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."³⁸⁵⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Qaf. By ^bthe glorious Qur'an, thou art a Messenger of God.³⁸⁵⁶

قُتِفَ الْقُرْآنُ الْمَجِيدُ ②

^aSee 1 : 1. b56 : 78.

3855. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

3856. Important Words :

The letter ق (*Qāf*) may stand for the Divine attribute قَادِر or قَدِير (*Qādir* or *Qadīr*) which means, the Mighty God; or the letter may stand for قِيَامَةُ حَق *i.e.*, the Resurrection is an undoubted reality. This is the last abbreviated letter used in the Qur'an and therefore possesses a special significance. For a detailed explanation, however, of the abbreviated letters (المقطعات) see 2 : 2 & 19 : 2.

و (by) among other things may mean, 'by' or 'I swear' or 'I cite as witness or evidence.' See also 37 : 2.

المجيد (Glorious) is derived from مجد (*majada*) which means, he was or became possessed of or characterized by glory, honour, dignity, nobility, etc., or he was or became glorious, in a state of honour, dignity; noble. مجدت الابل means, the camels fed in a land abounding with pasture, and satiated themselves therewith, or lighted upon abundant herbage. أجمده means, he made it (a gift) large or abundant. They say أجمدنا فلان قري *i.e.* such a one gave us a sufficient and super-abundant entertainment. The Arabs say أجمده سباً *i.e.*, he reviled and dispraised him much.

أجمد الدابة means, he gave the beast of carriage much fodder. Thus the primary signification of the root-word is abundance or superabundance. مجد (*majdun*) means, glory, honour, dignity, nobility; (syn. كرم & شرف و عز) or ample glory, nobility, honour, dignity, etc., or the acquisition of glory, honour, etc., or acquired or personal glory, honour, etc., transmitted by one's ancestors. مجيد means, a man possessing or characterized by glory, honour, dignity; nobility. المجيد as an epithet of God signifies the Glorious or Great in dignity, Who gives liberally or bountifully. مجيد is also applied in the Qur'an as an epithet to the Throne (عرش) of God and to the Qur'an itself and signifies exalted, sublime, noble, glorious (Lane & Aqrab). See also 38 : 2. The words القرآن المجيد thus may mean, the glorious Qur'an, the great Qur'an, the Qur'an possessing great and abundant good. In the last sense the word مجيد may be synonymous with مبارك which is also one of the epithets used by the Qur'an for itself (6 : 156). Elsewhere the Qur'an has been called the Qur'an full of wisdom (36 : 3), the Qur'an full of exhortation (38 : 2), the noble Qur'an (56 : 78), the Qur'an which explains things fully (12 : 3).

Commentary :

The construction of this verse exactly resembles that of 38 : 2. Taking the abbreviated letter

3. But they wonder that there has come to them a Warner from among themselves.^a And the disbelievers say, 'This is a strange thing'.³⁸⁵⁷

4. 'What! when we are dead and have become dust, *shall we be raised up again?*'^b That is a return far from possible.³⁸⁵⁸

5. We know how much the earth diminishes of them *and how much it adds to them*, and with Us is a Book that preserves *everything*.³⁸⁵⁹

بَلْ يَعْجَبُونَ أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ
هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ۚ

عِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۖ ذَلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ ۝

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَعِنْدَنَا
كِتَابٌ حَفِيفٌ ۝

^a7 : 64. ^b13 : 6; 23 : 36; 27 : 68; 37 : 17.

ق as signifying 'the Powerful God,' the verse may mean that the Powerful God swears by the Qur'ān, or that He cites the Qur'ān as witness, that by acting upon its teaching and making it a rule of their lives, its followers will achieve glory, greatness and spiritual and material grandeur. And by taking the letter as signifying القيامة i.e., the Resurrection is an undoubted reality, the verse would signify that Resurrection will certainly take place and that the glorious Qur'ān can be cited as an evidence to prove this claim. The proof consists in the fact: (1) that the Qur'ān has made two claims, viz., that by acting upon its teaching the weak, oppressed and persecuted followers of the Holy Prophet will achieve glory, greatness and spiritual and material eminence and an honoured place in the comity of world's great nations; and (2) that Resurrection will undoubtedly take place. The fulfilment of the first prophecy, the verse implies, will substantiate and establish the truth of the second claim.

3857. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that in spite of the fact that from time immemorial God has been sending His Messengers and Prophets to guide men to the way of truth and righteousness,

the people, whenever there appeared a Prophet, wondered, and considered it highly improbable that God should commission as His Messenger an ordinary man from among themselves. This attitude of disbelievers towards Divine Messengers has been referred to at several other places also in the Qur'ān (7 : 64; 10 : 3; 38 : 5).

3858. Commentary :

Greater is the disbelievers' wonder at the idea, says the verse, that when they are dead and are reduced to dust, they will get a new life.

3859. Commentary :

The verse refutes the disbelievers' objection mentioned in the preceding verse, viz., that when they are dead and reduced to broken bones and particles of dust they would be raised again. It is the physical body, says the verse, that disintegrates and perishes. The soul is imperishable and will be given a new body to account for the deeds done in this world which are recorded in "a Book that preserves everything." The verse may also mean that even the particles of objects which the earth

6. Nay, they rejected the truth when it came to them, and so they are in a state of confusion.³⁸⁶⁰

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي أَمْرٍ

مَرِيجٍ ⑥

7. Have they not lookd at the sky above them, how We have made it and adorned it,^a and there are no flaws in it?³⁸⁶¹

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا

وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ⑦

8. And the earth—We have spread it out, and placed therein firm mountains;^b and We have made to grow therein *every kind of* beautiful species,

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَالْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا

فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ ⑧

^a15 : 17; 37 : 7; 41 : 13; 67 : 6. ^b13 : 4; 15 : 20; 31 : 11; 77 : 28. ^c27 : 61; 31 : 11.

disintergrates are well preserved in God's knowledge. It may also signify that as complete knowledge about all the details of a thing presupposes the power to create it, and God being the Possessor of full knowledge of human anatomy and the process of its distintegration could recreate it after it had perished.

The verse may also signify that just as the earth corrupts and swallows up dead bodies, it also possesses the means of nourishing living ones.

3860. Important Words :

مرج (state of confusion) is derived from مرج (maraja) which means, he mixed a thing with another thing or two things together. مرج الامر (marija) means, the affair became corrupt, spoiled, disordered or in a confused or disordered state. مرج الناس means, the people became confused so that they could not extricate themselves from their perplexity (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that though disbe-

lievers always reject the Divine Message, their rejection or denial does not rest on sure ground. They are always in a confused state of mind. They do not know what they should make of the Message. They call it poetry, sorcery, the day-dreaming of an ambitious visionary, the confused vapourings of an unhinged mind, or the forgery of an impostor (21: 6). But the Holy Prophet and his followers stand on the bed-rock of certainty and sure knowledge.

3861. Important Words :

فروج (flaws) is the plural of فج which means, a cleft, an opening, a gap, and hence a flaw or defect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

This and the following few verses draw attention to the marvels of creation, the wonderful design in the universe, to the celestial firmament with its countless beautiful planets and stars, to earth and its wide expanse teeming with human and animal life, and points to the inevitable inference that the Great and Wise

9. As a means of enlightenment and as a reminder to every servant that turns to God.³⁸⁶²

تَبَصَّرَةٌ وَذِكْرٌ لِّكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُّئِنِّبٍ ⑩

10. "And We send down from the sky water which is full of blessings, and We produce therewith gardens and grain harvests.

وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً مُّبْرَكًا فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ جِبْتٍ
وَحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ ⑪

11. And tall plam-trees, with spathes piled one above the other.³⁸⁶³

وَالنَّخْلَ بَسَقَتْ لَهَا طَلْعٌ تَضِيدٌ ⑫

12. As a provision for *Our* servants; and We quicken thereby a dead land. Even so shall be the Resurrection.³⁸⁶⁴

بِرِزْقٍ لِّلْعِبَادِ وَأَخْيَيْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا كَذَلِكَ
الْخُرُوجُ ⑬

^a24 : 44; 25 : 49. ^b25 : 50; 43 : 12.

Designer, the Architect and the Controller, Who could bring into being this wonderful universe and who placed man at its centre, does possess the power to recreate the universe after its disintegration. and to give man a new life after he is dead.

3862. Commentary :

It is logical to assume a purpose behind physical nature. The concept of God as Designer and Creator of all things gives a coherent and complete picture of origin, design and purpose. And the existence of a purpose behind the creation implies the existence of a life after death because the very idea that with the dissolution of its physical tabernacle the human soul suffers death militates against the whole design of God and the purpose in creating the universe.

3863. Important Words :

باسقات (tall) is the plural of باسقة, fem. gen. of باسق which is act. part. from بسق. They say بسق النخل i.e., the palm trees were or became tall or exceedingly tall and full grown or

they bore fruit. بسق عليهم means, he overcame them, excelled them or was superior to them. بسق في علمه means, he excelled in his knowledge or learned the whole of it. بسقت الشمس means, the sun rose high. باسقى الاخلاق means, a person endowed with noble moral and mental qualities. نخلة باسقة means, an exceedingly tall palm tree or palm tree bearing fruit (Lane & Aqrab).

تضيد or منضود (piled, one above the other) is derived from نضد. They say نضد المتاع i.e., he put goods one upon the other or set them together in regular order or piled them up. تنضدت الاسنان means, the teeth were set in regular order (Lane & Aqrab).

3864. Commentary :

The verse means that just as God sends down rain from heaven and causes a dry dead land to bloom and blossom and pulsate with a new vigorous life, and brings forth from the earth all sorts of flowers and fruits, similarly He can and will give a new life to man after he is dead so that he might account for and be rewarded or

13. ^aThe people of Noah rejected *the truth* before them and *so did* the People of the Well and Thamūd.³⁸⁶⁵

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَأَصْحَابُ الرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ^{١٣}

14. And ‘Ād, and Pharaoh and the brethren of Lot.³⁸⁶⁶

وَعَادُ وَفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَانُ لُوطٍ^{١٤}

15. ^bAnd the Dwellers of the Wood, and the People of Tubba‘. ^cAll of them rejected the Messengers *with the result* that My threatened punishment befell them.³⁸⁶⁷

وَأَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدُ^{١٥}

16. ^dHave We then become weary with the first creation? Nay, but they are in confusion about the new creation.³⁸⁶⁸

أَفَعَيِينَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْأَوَّلِ بَلْ هُمْ فِي لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ^{١٦}

^a9 : 70; 14 : 10; 38 : 13; 40 : 32. ^b15 : 79; 26 : 177; 38 : 14. ^c15 : 80; 26 : 140; 38 : 15. ^d50 : 39.

punished for the actions good or bad he might have done in this world.

warning was literally fulfilled and, therefore, the second one is also bound to be fulfilled.

3865. Commentary :

For the People of Noah see 11 : 26—49; for اصحاب الرس (Companions of the Well) 25 : 39, and for Thamūd 11 : 62—69.

3866. Commentary :

For ‘Ād see 11 : 51—61.

3867. Commentary :

For اصحاب الايكة (Dwellers of the Wood) see 15 : 79 and for the People of Tubba‘ 44 : 38. The verse purports to say that the above-mentioned peoples were warned by their respective Prophets that if they rejected them, they would be punished in this world and would also have to account for their sins in the next. The first

3868. Important Words :

عِينَا (We have become weary) is derived from عى بأمره او عن أمره (‘ayya). They say *i.e.*, he lacked power, strength or ability to perform or accomplish his affair; was unable to execute it through or found not the right way to do it. عى الامر means, he was ignorant of the affair. عى أعيا means, he was or became tired, fatigued or wearied عى فى منطقته means, he found not the right way to express himself (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In these verses “creation,” besides its ordinary meaning, signifies spiritual awakening or revolution brought about by a Prophet among his people.

- 2 17. And assuredly, We have created man and We know what his mind whispers to him, and "We are nearer to him than *even his jugular vein*."³⁸⁶⁹

18. When the two Recording *angels* record *everything*, one sitting on his right and the other on his left.³⁸⁷⁰

19. He utters not a word but ^bthere is by him a guardian angel ready to record it.³⁸⁷¹

20. "And the stupor of death certainly comes. 'This is what thou wast trying to run from.'³⁸⁷²

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ

نَفْسُهُ ۖ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ۝١٧

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّينَ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ

قَعِيدٌ ۝١٨

مَا يَلْفُظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ۝١٩

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ

مِنْهُ تَجِيدٌ ۝٢٠

^a86 : 5 ^b43 : 81; 82 : 11-12. ^c6 : 94 ; 23 : 100.

3869. Commentary :

Wonderful is God's creation of the universe, but much more wonderful is the creation of man. The fact that man is master of his conduct and is responsible for his decisions is here put forward as another argument to support the inevitability of the Resurrection. In fact man's life on earth is "the seed-bed of an eternal future."

3870. Important Words :

يتلقى (will record) is derived from تلقى . They say تلقى الشيئ منه i.e., he received or got the thing; he learned it from him, hence preserved or recorded it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

According to some Commentators the angel sitting on man's right records his good actions and that on his left, his bad actions; the words 'on the right' standing for his good actions and 'on the left' for his bad actions. Every deed or spoken word leaves its impress in the

atmosphere and thus is preserved. Elsewhere in the Qur'an, it is stated that the limbs of man—his hands, feet and tongue—will bear witness against him on the Judgment Day. Thus different parts of a man's body may also be the recorders referred to in the present verse as the two Recording angels. See also 24 : 25; 36 : 66.

3871. Important Words :

يلفظ (he utters) is aorist from لفظ . They say لفظه البحر i.e., the sea cast it forth upon the shore, لفظ فلان نفسه means, such a one died. لفظ القول او بالقول means, he uttered or spoke the word (Lane & Aqrab).

عتيد (ready) is derived from عتد . They say عتد الشيئ i.e., the thing was or became ready, at hand, prepared; it became great, big or bulky. عتيد means, ready, at hand, near; bulky, big or great (Lane & Aqrab).

3872. Important Words :

تعيد (thou wast trying to run from) is derived from حاد . They say حاد عنه او منه i.e., he

21. "And the trumpet shall be blown: 'This is the Day of Promise.'"

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ ۝٢١

22. And every soul shall come forth *and* along with it there will be an *angel* to drive and an *angel* to bear witness.³⁸⁷³

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ ۝٢٢

23. *Then We shall say*, 'Thou wast heedless of this; now We have removed from thee thy veil, and sharp is thy sight this day'.³⁸⁷⁴

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ۝٢٣

24. And his companion will say, 'This is what I have ready of his record.'³⁸⁷⁵

وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَذَا مَا لَدَيَّ عَتِيدٌ ۝٢٤

a18 : 100; 23 : 102; 36 : 52; 39 : 69; 69 : 14.

turned aside or away from it; he removed or went away or went far away from it; he shunned or avoided it from fear or disdain. حاد عن الطريق means, he turned aside from the road (Lane & Aqrab).

thing. حد شيئا عن غيره means, he distinguished or separated by some mark a thing from another. حد السكين means, he sharpened the knife. حد بصره اليه means, he looked sharply or attentively at him. رجل حديد means, a man sharp of intellect or understanding (Lane).

3873. Commentary :

سائق (driver) may be the angel that sits on man's left and records his bad deeds and as a punishment for them will drive him to Hell, and شهيد may be the angel that sits on his right and records his good actions and will bear witness in his favour. Or the two words metaphorically may stand for man's misused limbs and faculties and those well and properly used. See also verse 18 above; 24 : 25 and 36 : 66.

Commentary :

The verse means that in the next world the veil will be lifted from the eyes of man and his vision and mental perception will become clearer and sharper. He will see the consequences of his actions in an embodied form which were hidden from his eyes in this world and will realize that which he used to regard merely as an illusion, was a hard and stark reality.

3874. Important Words :

بصر (eye) means, eye; the light whereby the organ of sight perceives the things; knowledge; discernment; intelligence (Lane & Aqrab).

3875. Commentary :

حديد (sharp) is derived from حد which means, he turned away or averted a person from a

قرينه (his companion) may signify his evil companion, or the Satan, who has been called elsewhere in the Qur'ān, man's evil companion 4 : 39; 43 : 39, because it is at his instigation that man defies God's commandments.

25. *We shall say to his two Companions, 'Cast ye twain into Hell every ungrateful enemy of truth'*³⁸⁷⁶

أَلْقِيَا فِي جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ^{٢٥}

26. "Hinderer of good, transgressor, doubter.

مَتَاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ^{٢٦}

27. 'Who sets up another God besides Allah. so do ye twain cast him into the dreadful torment.'

الَّذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيدِ^{٢٧}

28. ^bHis associate will say, 'O our Lord, it was not I that caused him to rebel ; but he *himself* was too far gone in error.'

قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطْغَيْتُهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ^{٢٨}

29. God will say, 'Quarrel not in My presence; I gave you the warning beforehand.'³⁸⁷⁷

قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ بِالْوَعِيدِ^{٢٩}

30. 'The sentence *passed by Me* cannot be changed, 'and I am not in the least unjust to *My* servants.'³⁸⁷⁸

مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ وَمَا أَنَا بِظَالِمٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ^{٣٠}

^a68 : 13. ^b14 : 23. ^c3 : 183 ; 8 : 52; 22 : 11 ; 41 : 47.

3876. Important Words :

عنيد (enemy) is derived from عند which means, he went aside from it ; he opposed and rejected what was true or just; he overstepped or transgressed the proper bound or limit; he acted immoderately or in rebellion. عنيد is used here in all the senses of the root-word (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The dual form in أَلْقِيَا is used either because the command is given to the two angels—the سائق and the شهيد — or in order to impart emphasis to the command. This form of expression is also used in 23 : 100 where a plural verb is used for the subject in the singular. The plural form ارجعون in that verse is used to lend emphasis to the disbelievers' desire to be sent

back to this world, and represents the repetition of the singular form ارجعنى (irj'ini).

3877. Commentary :

It is human nature that when an evil-doer is confronted with the evil consequences of his deeds, he seeks to shift his responsibility to others. It is this state of mind of the disbeliever which is depicted in this verse. He will hold Satan responsible for his own transgressions and sins. See also 2 : 167-168.

3878. Commentary :

God admonishes both the parties to stop wrangling and quarrelling and shifting the responsibility to one another as His sentence has already been pronounced and His Word never changes.

- R. 3 31. On that day We will say to Hell,
'Art thou filled up?' and it will answer,
'Is there any more?'³⁸⁷⁹

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأَتْ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ

مِنْ مَّزِيدٍ ③

32. *And Heaven will be brought
near to the righteous, no longer re-
mote.³⁸⁸⁰

وَأَزَلَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلتَّائِبِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ ④

33. *And it will be said, 'This is what
was promised to you—to everyone
who always turned to God and was
watchful of his actions.*

هَذَا مَا تَوْعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيفٍ ⑤

34. 'Who feared the Gracious God
in private and came to Him with a
penitent heart.

مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ ⑥

35. ^bEnter ye therein in peace.
This is the Day of Eternity'.³⁸⁸¹

إَدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ ⑦

a26 : 91; 81 : 14. b14 : 24; 15 : 47; 36 : 59.

3879. Commentary :

The dialogue is metaphorical. Hell has been personified here and words are put in its mouth to express its state or condition and not that it will actually speak or, for that matter, it can speak. The word قال has been used in this sense in 41 : 12 also where the heaven and the earth have been described as *saying* that they obey Divine laws willingly. It is one of the peculiarities and beauties of the Arabic language that it uses words and expressions for inanimate things which are used for human beings. There is a famous Arabic proverb :

قال الجدار للوتد لم تشقني قالت سل من يدقني

i.e., the wall said to the peg "why dost thou pierce me." It said, "ask him who strikes me from behind." Similarly, a famous Arab poet says :

يريد الرمح صدر أبي براء
ويعدل عن دماء بني عقيل

i.e., the spear intends to pierce the breast of Abū Barā', but it turns away from the blood of the sons of 'Uqail. (Lane).

The expression هل من مزيد in fact, points to man's unlimited capacity for committing sins and his inordinate desire for worldly comforts which pave his way to Hell.

3880. Commentary :

If, as mentioned in the preceding verse, more and more sinners will be thrown into Hell for being purged and purified of their spiritual maladies, the present verse says, that Heaven will also be brought near for the righteous and the God-fearing.

3881. Commentary :

However dreadful its punishments may appear, Hell, according to the Qur'ān, is a temporary penitentiary, while Heaven is an eternal abode; its blessings know no limit or end (11 : 109).

36. "They will have therein whatever they desire, and with Us is a good deal more.³⁸⁸²

37. ^bAnd how many a generation, who were greater than they in power, have We destroyed before them. They went about the lands *devising means to escape the punishment*. Was there any place of refuge for them?³⁸⁸³

38. Therein, verily, is a reminder for him who has a heart, or who gives ear, and is attentive.³⁸⁸⁴

39. "And verily, We created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six periods and ^ano weariness touched Us.³⁸⁸⁵

لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ^{٣٦}

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ هَلْ مِنْ مَخِصٍ^{٣٧}

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ^{٣٨}

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ^{٣٩} وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِنْ لُغُوبٍ^{٣٩}

^a10 : 27. ^b17 : 18; 19 : 75; 21 : 12; 36 : 32.

^c7 : 55; 10 : 4; 11 : 8; 25 : 60. ^d50 : 16.

3882. Commentary :

The righteous will have in Paradise what they desire, to their hearts' content, but as man's desires at best are limited, they will be given much more than what they desire or deserve, much more than what they would even contemplate or conceive. They will see the beautiful face of God and will bask in the warmth of His countenance. This beautified vision in which the veil which divides man from Allah will be lifted and His Heavenly Glory disclosed to the soul, untrammelled by its earthly raiments is, according to some authorities, what is meant by the words *ولدينا مزيد* i.e., and with Us is a good deal more.

3883. Important Words :

نَقَّبُوا (went about) is the intensive form of *نَقَبَ* (*naqaba*) which means, he made a hole through a wall; he perforated, pierced or made a hole through anything. *نَقَبَ فِي الْأَرْضِ* means, he went or went away through the land or country or journeyed or traversed through the land.

Commentary :

Divine punishment, when it comes, is overwhelming and all-encompassing. There is no escape or refuge from it, however one may try.

3884. Important Words :

قَلْب (heart) means, heart; the soul; the conscience; the mind, meaning the intellect; the endeavour to understand, and consideration. They say *مَا لَهُ قَلْبٌ* i.e., he has no intellect or intelligence; the purest or best or choicest part of a thing; *قَلْبُ الْجَيْشِ* means, the main body of the army; as distinguished from the van and the rear and the two wings. The word also signifies, a man genuine or pure in respect of origin or lineage, holding a middle place among his people (Lane & Aqrab).

3885. Important Words :

أَيَّامٍ (periods) is the plural of *يَوْمٌ* which properly means, time absolutely (1 : 4) or indefinite period or stage in the development of a thing. It does not always denote the day

40. So bear with patience what they say, and ^aglorify thy Lord with His praise, before the rising of the sun and before its setting;

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ
طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ۚ

41. ^bAnd in a part of the night also do thou glorify Him, and after *prescribed* prostrations.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ ۝٤١

42. And listen, on the day when the crier will cry from a place nearby,³⁸⁸⁶

وَأَسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ الْمُنَادِ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ۝٤٢

43. The day when they will hear the blast in truth; that will be the day of coming forth *from the graves*.³⁸⁸⁷

يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ الصَّيْحَةَ بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُرُوجِ ۝٤٣

^a15 : 99; 17 : 79; 20 : 76 : 27. 131; 110 : 4.

^b17 : 80; 52 : 50; 73 : 3—5;

as determined by the rising and setting of the sun. In the Qur'ān يوم has been spoken of as equal to one or even fifty thousand years (22 : 48; 70 : 5). Elsewhere in the Qur'ān the division of these six days has been described in this wise; the making of the earth took two days; it took two more days for mountains, rivers, etc., to be placed upon it, and another two days for the growth of vegetable and animal life on it. See also 10 : 4; 41 : 10—13.

لغَب (weariness) is infinitive noun from لغِب which means, he was fatigued, tired or wearied to the utmost; he was languid in consequence of fatigue; he was wearied in spirit or mind (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

It is characteristic of the Qur'ān that not only does it exonerate God's noble Prophets from all the vices and immoralities imputed to them in the Bible, but it also clears the Divine Being of the flaws and defects that are inconsistent

with His Majesty and Holiness. The Bible depicts God as "having rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Gen. 2 : 2) but according to the Qur'ān no weariness can touch Him.

3886. Commentary :

The "crier" may refer to the Holy Prophet. The context supports this, as the next few verses seem to refer to the spiritual resurrection brought about by the Holy Prophet among his people who at his call rose, as it were, from their graves, as the next verse implies.

The words "from a place nearby" may also signify that the call of the Holy Prophet will not remain a call in the wilderness, a distant cry. It will be listened to and accepted.

3887. Commentary :

"The blast" may also signify the stentorian call to truth of the Holy Prophet.

44. ^aVerily, it is We Who give life and cause death, and to Us is the final return.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ۝٣٧

45. ^bOn the day when the earth will cleave asunder *in consequence of their misdeeds* and they will come forth hastening—that will be a gathering quite easy for Us.

يَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ الْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا
يَسِيرٌ ۝٣٨

46. We know best what they say; and thou hast not been appointed to compel them in any way.^c So admonish, by means of the Qur'an, him who fears My warning.³⁸⁸⁸

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَّارٍ ۚ
فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنْ يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ۝٣٩

^a15 : 24. ^b84 : 4. ^c6 : 108; 39 : 42; 42 : 7.

3888. Commentary :

The verse shows that the resurrection to which reference has been made in the preceding verse was to be brought about by the preaching and teaching of the Qur'an. The *Sūra* had opened with the subject of the Final Resurrection, and the great eminence and glory which the Muslims were to

achieve through the Qur'an was advanced as an argument in its support. God, Man, Creation and Resurrection are the four pillars on which the whole edifice of the Quranic teaching stands, and the present *Sūra* derives its importance from the fact that it has dealt with these subjects in some detail.

CHAPTER 51

AL-DHĀRIYĀT

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation and Context

This is a Meccan *Sūra*. Like its predecessor it was revealed early in the Holy Prophet's ministry. Its contents and style seem to support this view. Noldeke assigns its revelation to the fourth year of the Call. It derives its title from its first word—*Al-Dhāriyāt*. It has 61 verses.

The preceding *Sūra* had dealt with two resurrections—a spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the teaching of the Qur'ān, and the Final Resurrection in the life after death, the former resurrection being cited as an argument in support of the latter. In the present *Sūra* it is stated that a body of highly righteous men would come into existence through the influence of Quranic teachings on their lives. Like moisture-laden clouds which give rain to vast areas of parched and burnt land and make them blossom into new life, this holy band of righteous believers, having themselves awakened to a new spiritual life would carry the Quranic Message to the ends of the earth, sweeping all opposition before their onward march. The prediction, seemingly impossible of fulfilment at the time of revelation of the *Sūra*, would constitute, when turned into a palpable reality, a strong argument to establish the fact of the Great Resurrection in the after-life.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* says that whenever a Divine Messenger appears in the world to tell his people that there is a life beyond the grave in which they will have to account for their deeds they laugh him to scorn, and oppose and persecute him. But from among these very people there arise a company of good men who accept the Divine Message. The rejectors are punished and the believers receive God's favours. The *Sūra* proceeds to cite the case of Patriarch Abraham who was visited by certain messengers who came to tell him that a dreadful fate awaited the people of Lot because of their iniquities and unnatural and highly immoral practices. Next, it briefly refers to the punishment that overtook Pharaoh, Ād, Thamūd and the people of Noah. Towards the end the *Sūra* draws pointed attention to the supreme object of man's creation which is to cultivate and demonstrate in himself Divine attributes, and to discharge fully and faithfully his obligations to God and his fellow-beings.

سُورَةُ الذَّرِيَّتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ ﴿٥١﴾

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.³⁸⁸⁹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By those that scatter *with a true* scattering.³⁸⁹⁰

وَالَّذِينَ ذَرَوْا ②

3. Then carry the load.³⁸⁹¹

فَالْجِبِلَّتِ وَقَرًا ③

4. Then speed lightly along.³⁸⁹²

فَالْجَرِيَّتِ يُسْرًا ④

5. *And* then distribute by command.³⁸⁹³

فَالْمُقَسِّمَتِ أَمْرًا ⑤

①See 1 : 1.

3889. **Commentary :**

See 1 : 1.

3890. **Important Words :**

For the meanings of the particle *واو* (by), and for the philosophy of the Quranic oaths see 37 : 2; 50 : 2 and 91 : 2.

الذاريات (those that scatter) is the plural of ذارية which is act. part. from ذرى or ذرى. They say ذرى الشيئى *i.e.*, the thing flew in the air. أذرى الريح التراب means, the wind raised, carried away or dispersed the dust. الذاريات means, the winds that raise or carry away or disperse, or the angels that cause the scattering away of the created things. ذروا which is infinitive noun is added to الذاريات to add intensiveness to the meaning or to complete it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

For a collective note on this and the next three verses see v. 5 below.

3891. **Important Words :**

وقرأ (load) is derived from قرأ which means,

(1) he was or became dull of hearing; (2) he or it was or became still or motionless; he rested; (3) he was or became grave, staid, steady, sedate or calm. They say وقرت النخلة أو أوقرت *i.e.*, the palm tree became laden or heavily laden with fruit. أوقره الدين means, debt burdened him or burdened him heavily. قر (wiqrun) means, a load, a heavy load ; a weight that is carried upon the back or head; a cloud laden with water. قر (waqrun) means, a heaviness in the ear; or dullness of hearing; entire loss of hearing (Lane & Aqrab).

3892. **Commentary :**

See next verse.

3893. **Commentary :**

From a phenomenon in physical nature the four verses (2—5) draw attention to a parallel spiritual phenomenon. The parallelism is striking. The four words الذاريات (those that scatter), الحاملات (those that carry), الجاريات (those that speed lightly along) and المقسمات (those that distribute), when pointing to the physical phenomenon, may stand for winds that scatter far and wide the vapours that rise

6. Surely, that which you are promised is true^{a. 3894}

7. And the Judgment will surely come to pass.

8. And by the heaven full of tracks.³⁸⁹⁵

9. Truly, you are discordant in what you say.³⁸⁹⁶

إِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ ۖ

وَإِنَّ الدِّينَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۚ

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ ۚ

إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي قَوْلٍ مُّتخَلِّفٍ ۙ

452 : 8.

from the oceans, carry the clouds laden with rain-water, blow gently and then cause rain to fall on dry, parched and burnt land and turn it into a smiling, blooming and blossoming piece of earth, full of verdure, beautiful flowers and sweet fruits. These four words may also stand for the band of righteous men who drinking deep at the spiritual fountain that the Holy Prophet caused to flow; and after assimilating and becoming impregnated with the beautiful and life-giving Quranic teaching, went to the remote corners of Arabia and afterwards to far-off lands, carrying their blessed load, and scattering the revealed Word of God in countries, reeking with polytheistic beliefs and immoral practices—not with the sword but with love and peace, like winds that blow gently and carry rain to withered lands.

3894. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the holy men of God referred to in the preceding four verses will discharge their sacred obligations fully and faithfully, and will thus fulfil prophecies concerning the spread and triumph of Islam. This fact will show that the promise about life after death and about the Resurrection was true.

3895. Important Words :

الحبک (tracks) is the plural of بیکة (and حباک) which is derived from حبک. They

say حبکه i.e., he tried it, and made it firm; he wore it firmly and well. بیکة means, the track of the stars, the streak or track in the sky; the path or way. حبک السماء means, the tracks, paths, ways in the heaven. حباک means, the black thread with which are sewn the borders of a cloth; a streak or line; the ripples of sand. حبک الماء means, the ripples of water (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Tracks or paths of heaven (حبک السماء) are the orbits of planets, comets, and stars with which the vault of heaven is strewn. These celestial bodies float, in their respective orbits performing their allotted tasks regularly, punctually and unerringly, without trespassing on one another's sphere of action and all united forming a glorious harmony of structure and motion. That the heaven is full of such tracks on which planets and stars travel, was a discovery made to the world by the Qur'ān at a time when it was believed that the heavens were solid in their formation. Does not this fact alone constitute an argument in support of the Qur'ān being the revealed Word of God?

3896. Commentary :

The verse means to say that the great astronomical truth revealed in the preceding verse leads to the inference that the Qur'ān is God's

10. He *alone* is turned away from the truth who is decreed to be turned away.³⁸⁹⁷

يُؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ^{١٠}

11. Cursed be the liars.³⁸⁹⁸

قُتِلَ الْخَرَّصُونَ^{١١}

12. Who are heedless of truth in the depth of ignorance.³⁸⁹⁹

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ^{١٢}

13. They ask: 'When will be the Day of Judgment?'³⁹⁰⁰

يَسْأَلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّينِ^{١٣}

a7 : 188; 79 : 43.

own revealed Word and that there exists a unity of purpose and harmony in Divine work, and yet the materialistic philosophers coin far-fetched theories, groping and floundering in ill-founded surmises and conjectures, not believing in God's Word and His Prophet.

3897. Commentary :

The expression من أفيك means: he on account of whose evil and wilful conduct the Divine decree that he should be turned away from truth comes into operation. Or it means : he who himself would turn away.

3898. Important Words :

الخراصون (liars) is the plural of خراص (kharrās) which is the intensive form of خارس which is act. part. from خرس which means, he lied, he said what was untrue. خرس النخل means, he computed by conjecture the quantity of the fruit upon the palm-trees. تخرص و اخترص (takharra'a) means, he forged a lie. خارس means, a liar and خراص a great liar (Lane & Aqrab).

3899. Important Words :

غمرة (depth of ignorance) is derived from غمر (ghamara). They say غمره الماء i.e., the water rose

above him and submerged him. غمر عليه means, he fainted or swooned. غمر الرجل (ghamora) means, the man was ignorant or inexperienced in the affair. غمرة means, depth or flood of ignorance; error; obstinacy and perplexity; overwhelming heedlessness or ignorance; a state of obstinate perseverance in a vain and false thing; water that rises above the stature of a man (Lane & Aqrab).

سَاهُونَ (heedless) is the plural of ساهى (or سهوان) and is derived from سها. They say سها فيه او سها عنه i.e., he was or became unmindful, forgetful, neglectful or heedless of it or inadvertent to it, his mind adverting to another thing or affair or case. According to some these two expressions slightly differ in their significations; سها فيه meaning, he neglected the thing and سها عنه means, he neglected the thing knowingly (Lane & Aqrab).

3900. Commentary :

The verse may mean: (1) They ask, in derision or scoffingly, when the Day of Judgment will be? (2) Their behaviour, conduct or attitude shows that they do not believe in the Day of Judgment.

14. Say, 'It will be the day when they will be tormented at the Fire.'³⁹⁰¹

15. 'Taste ye your torment. This is what you would hasten.'^a

16. But surely the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and springs^b.³⁹⁰²

17. Receiving what their Lord will bestow upon them; for they used to do good before that.³⁹⁰³

18. They used to sleep but a little of the night^c.³⁹⁰⁴

19. And at the dawn of the day they sought forgiveness^d;

20. And in their wealth was a share^e for one who asked for help and for one who could not^e.³⁹⁰⁵

يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ ⑬

ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ⑮

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ⑮

أُخْذِينَ مِمَّا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ

ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ ⑭

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ ⑰

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ⑱

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ⑲

^a22 : 48; 26 : 205; 27 : 72—73; 29 : 54—55.

^b15 : 46; 52 : 18; 68 : 35; 77 : 42; 78 : 32.

^c32 : 17.

^d3 : 18.

^e70 : 25—26.

3901. Commentary :

In the preceding verse the disbelievers were mentioned as asking mockingly, "When will be the Day of Judgment?" Here they are answered with a retort that "It will be the day when they will be burned in the fire."

3902. Commentary :

As against those who flounder in the welter of wrong beliefs and evil deeds and deny the possibility of the Day of Judgment, the righteous and the God-fearing will reside in heavenly gardens, full of springs and streams—the spiritual embodiments of the good deeds they had done in this life.

3903. Commentary :

Two different words have been used in the preceding and the present verse for the righteous

believers — متقين (God-fearing) and محسنين (those who do good). A متقى is one who discharges his obligations faithfully and fully to God and man, and a محسن is he who does more good to others than the good he receives from them and acts and behaves as though he is actually seeing God or, in a lesser degree, he is conscious of God watching over him. Thus a محسن is a person of higher spiritual stature than a متقى.

3904. Important Words :

يهجعون (they used to sleep) is derived from هجع which means, he slept or slept in the night. هجوع is sleeping at night and هجود is sleeping in the day time, or remaining awake (Lane & Aqrab). See also 17 : 79 and 73 : 7.

3905. Commentary :

In the wealth of a rich Muslim, according to Islam, those who can express their needs also, as

21. And in the earth are Signs for those who have certainty of faith,

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. And *also* in your own selves. Will you not then see?

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. And in heaven is your sustenance,^a and *also* that which you are promised.³⁹⁰⁶

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. And by the Lord of the heaven and the earth, it is certainly the truth, even as you speak.³⁹⁰⁷

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

440 : 14 ; 45 : 6.

those who cannot, have a share, as of right. Thus a Muslim's wealth is a trust to the benefit of which the poor are also entitled. Elsewhere the Qur'ān says: "And give the relatives their rightful share in your property and to the poor and the needy" (17 : 26). So when a Muslim meets the needs of a poor brother, he does him no special favour but only discharges the obligation he owes to him and returns to him what was his due.

The word المحروم (those who cannot express their needs) not only includes in its connotation those poor people who, from a sense of self-respect or a feeling of shame, are prevented from asking (2 : 274), but also dumb animals. The word, therefore, has been taken here as signifying a person who is debarred from earning his livelihood due to physical infirmity or some other similar cause.

رزق (sustenance) signifies both physical as well as spiritual sustenance.

The words "that which you are pro-

mised" may signify promises of triumph and prosperity to believers and warnings to disbelievers.

3906. Commentary :

Wonderful indeed is the creation of the universe. But much more wonderful is the creation of man, its centre and apex. There are signs in the creation of the physical universe and in that of man—the universe in miniature—to show that truth triumphs and prevails in the long run and falsehood suffers defeat and discomfiture.

3907. Commentary :

The verse means that the fact mentioned in the preceding verse is neither wishful thinking on the Holy Prophet's part, nor is it a figment of his imagination, but is solid and hard truth as sure and true as "you speak." Or the verse may mean that the Qur'ān is as undoubtedly God's own revealed Word as "you speak."

R. 2 25. Has the story of Abraham's honoured guests reached thee?^{a 3908}

26. When they came to him and said, 'Peace!'^b he said, 'Peace!' They were all strangers.^c

27. And he went quietly to his household, and brought a fatted calf,^d

28. And he placed it before them and said, 'Will you not eat?'^{e 3909}

29. And he conceived a fear of them.^f They said, 'Fear not.' And they gave him glad tidings of the birth of a son possessing knowledge.³⁹¹⁰

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ

مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَرَاغَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشَرُوا

بِعِلْمٍ عَلَيْهِ ﴿٢٩﴾

^a11 : 70; 15 : 52.

^b11 : 70; 15 : 53.

^c11 : 71.

^d11 : 70.

^e11 : 71; 15 : 53.

^f11 : 72; 21 : 73;

29 : 28; 37 : 113.

3908. Commentary :

In the foregoing verses an implied reference was made to the great moral revolution that was to be brought about in the Arabian society through the selfless efforts of a band of holy men who were to carry the Message of Islam to the ends of the earth. The verse under comment and those that follow treat the same subject from a different angle. Here history is introduced and the examples of the Prophets Abraham, and Moses, and those of the people of Noah and of 'Ād and Thamūd have been briefly mentioned.

There seems to exist some difference of opinion among Commentators of the Qur'ān as to who these honoured guests were. Some hold them to be angels; others think that they were righteous men of the locality who had come to inform Abraham that the time of the punishment of Lot's people had arrived, and to take Lot to a place of safety. The idea that they were angels might have arisen from the fact that they have been called "Our messengers" in the Qur'ān (11 : 77), and also because

when food was placed before them, they refused to partake of it. But nowhere in the Qur'ān are these "messengers" described as angels of punishment; nor do angels ever walk on earth as Divine Messengers (17 : 96). The mere fact that they refused to partake of the food, can lend no support to the view that they were angels. There might be other reasons for the refusal.

3909. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse shed some light on the rules of hospitality.

3910. Important Words :

أَوْجَسَ (conceived) is derived from وَجَسَ and means, he conceived, perceived or felt a thing in his mind. See also 20 : 68.

Commentary :

In the present verse as also in 15 : 54 "the promised son," has been described as "a son endowed with knowledge," while in 37 : 102, he has been called "a forbearing son." In the former verses the reference is to Isaac and in the latter to Ishmael.

30. Then his wife came forward extremely embarrassed, and smote her face and said, 'A barren old woman'!^{a3911}

فَأَقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَ
قَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ ۝٣٠

31. They said, "Even so has thy Lord said. Surely, He is the Wise, the All-Knowing."

قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ
الْعَلِيمُ ۝٣١

32. Abraham said, 'Now what is your errand,^e O ye who have been sent?'³⁹¹²

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ۝٣٢

33. They said, 'We have been sent to a sinful people.'^d

قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ ۝٣٣

34. 'That we may send down upon them stones of clay.'^e

لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِنْ طِينٍ ۝٣٤

35. 'Marked,^f with thy Lord, for those guilty of excesses.'³⁹¹³

مُسَوَّمَةٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ ۝٣٥

^a11 : 73.

^b11 : 74.

^c15 : 58.

^d15 : 59.

^e11 : 83.

^f11 : 84.

3911. Important Words :

صرّة (extreme embarrassment) is derived from صر which means, it made a sound or noise or a prolonged sound; he cried or raised a clamour with utmost vehemence. صرّة means, vociferation or clamour or the most vehement clamour of crying; vehemence of grief, heat or anxiety; a contraction and moroseness of the face by reason of dislike or hatred or shame; a fit (Lane & Aqrab).

صكت (smote). صكه means, he struck him or hit violently or he slapped him with his hand upon the back of his neck or upon his face. صك الباب means, he locked the door. صك وجهه means, he slapped his face (Lane & Aqrab).

3912. Important Words :

خطبك (your errand). خطب means, a thing, an affair, or a business small or great; the cause or occasion of a thing or an event. They say ما خطبك i.e., what is the thing or affair or business that thou seekest or desirest to do; or what is the cause of thy coming? (Lane & Aqrab). See also 12 : 52.

3913. Commentary :

The Divine punishment which seized the people of Lot is variously described in the Qur'ān by the words حاصب i.e., storm of stones (54 : 35); صيحة i.e., a blast and حجارة i.e., stones of clay (11 : 83). These people seemed to have been destroyed by a violent earthquake which turned parts of the earth upside down (11 : 83).

36. And We brought forth therefrom such of the believers as were there.^a

فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَنْ كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٣٦

37. And We found not there except one house of those who were obedient to us.³⁹¹⁴

فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ٣٧

38. And We left therein a Sign^b for those who fear painful punishment.

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ٣٨

39. ^cAnd in the story of Moses also there were many Signs when We sent him to Pharaoh with clear authority.³⁹¹⁵

وَفِي مُوسَى إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطٰنٍ

مُبِينٍ ٣٩

40. But he turned away from Moses on account of his power, and said, 'A sorcerer, or a madman.'³⁹¹⁶

فَقَوْلَىٰ بِرُكْنِهِ وَقَالَ سِحْرٌ أَوْ جُنُونٌ ٤٠

41. ^dSo We seized him and his hosts and threw them into the sea; and he himself was to blame.

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ وَهُوَ

مُذْمَرٌ ٤١

^a15 : 60; 29 : 33. ^b15 : 76; 29 : 36. ^c11 : 97; 23 : 46—47; 40 : 24. ^d10 : 91; 28 : 41; 79 : 26.

3914. Commentary :

The house referred to in the verse was that of Lot minus his wife, who chose to side with her disbelieving relatives and refused to go with Lot.

3915. Commentary :

For the story of Moses, the Divine Message he gave to Pharaoh, for his mission of the deliverance of Israelites from a most debasing and disgraceful bondage and for the causes that led to the undoing and destruction of Pharaoh and his mighty hosts see 7 : 104-156; 10 : 76-93 ; 20 : 10-55 ; 26 : 11-69 & 28 : 4-45.

3916. Important Words :

رُكْنٌ (power) is derived from رَكَنَ (rakana

or rakina). They say رَكَنَ إِلَيْهِ i.e., he inclined towards him or it; he trusted or relied upon him or it so as to be or become easy or quiet in mind ; he was or became firm, still, grave, staid, sedate or calm. رَكْنٌ (ruknum) means, side or outward part of a thing; a stay or support; power, might and resistance; a man's kinsfolk or clan, his people or party; persons by whom he is aided and strengthened; a noble or high person. They say هُوَ رَكْنٌ مِنْ أَرْكَانِ قَوْمِهِ i.e., he is an important person among the great men of his people. The word also means, an affair of great importance; a formidable event; the essence of a thing whereby it subsists. أَرْكَانُ الصَّلَاةِ means, the fundamentals of Prayer without which it is incomplete (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

42. And *there was a Sign* in the story of the tribe of 'Ād, when We sent against them the destructive wind.^{a3917}

43. ^bIt spared nothing whatever that it came upon but made it like a rotten bone.

44. And *a Sign* there was in the story of the tribe of Thamūd when it was said to them,^c 'Enjoy yourselves for a while.'³⁹¹⁸

45. But they rebelled against the command of their Lord. So the thunderbolt overtook them while they gazed^d;

46. And they were not able to rise up *again*, nor could they defend themselves.³⁹¹⁹

47. And *We destroyed* the people of Noah before *them*; they were a disobedient people.³⁹²⁰

48. And We have built the heaven with *Our own* hands, and verily We have vast powers.³⁹²¹

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ ﴿٣٧﴾

مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ كَالْزَمِيمِ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَفِي ثَمُودَ إِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَسْعُوا كَعَجَلٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْقَةُ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مِنْ قِيَامٍ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنْتَصِرِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

^a46 : 25.

^b46 : 26.

^c11 : 66.

^d11 : 68.

3917. Commentary :

For the story of 'Ād see 11 : 51 - 61 and 26 : 124—141.

3918. Commentary :

For a detailed note on Thamūd see 11 : 62 and 26 : 142.

3919. Important Words :

منتصرين (defend themselves) is derived from انتصر which means, he gained victory and power; he defended himself. They say انتصر من عدوه i.e., he took revenge from his enemy. انتصر على عدوه means, he triumphed over his enemy (Lane & Agrab).

3920. Commentary :

For a somewhat detailed account of Noah see 11 : 37—50.

3921. Important Words :

أيد (hands) is plural of يد which has a vast variety of meanings, some of which are : (1) benefit, bounty, favour; (2) power, might, influence; dignity, rank or status ; (3) assistance, help, protection; (4) possessions, wealth ; (5) host, army; etc. See also 38 : 46. بين يديه means, before him, in his presence. ما لك عليه يد means, you have no power or influence over him. سقط في يده means, he was smitten with remorse, he repented. هذا في يدي means, it is in my possession. بنيناها بأيدي may mean, We have created it

49. "And the earth We have spread out, and *how* excellently We lay it out!"

50. And of everything have We created pairs,^b that you may reflect.³⁹²²

51. Flee ye therefore unto Allah. Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.^{c3923}

52. And do not set up another god along with Allah.^a Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.³⁹²⁴

53. Even so there came no Messenger to those before them, but they said, 'A sorcerer, or a madman!'

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْبَهْدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَفِرُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

كَذَلِكَ مَا آتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مُجْنُونٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

^a2 : 23; 20 : 54; 78 : 7. ^b13 : 4; 36 : 37. ^c22 : 50; 26 : 116; 29 : 51; 67 : 27.
^d23 : 118; 50 : 27.

with power and might, or We have made the heaven as a manifestation of Our power and might (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse makes pointed reference to God's marvellous handiwork—the universe, creation of which leads directly to the object of the creation of man, who is the aim and object of its creation and its acme and apex. In the creation of the heavens and the earth there is proof of many Divine attributes, the prominent being His Glory, Might and Majesty.

3922. Commentary :

The verse implies a subtle allusion to the object of man's creation, one of the main themes of the *Sūra*. The verse, like several other Quranic verses states that God has created all things in pairs. There are pairs not only in animal life, but also in vegetables, and even in

inanimate things. There are pairs also in spiritual things. Even heaven and earth make a pair. Unless water comes from heaven and the sun gives warmth and light to the earth there can be no vegetation. Similarly, the human soul, which has been compared to earth in the foregoing verses, can find no scope for the manifestation of its latent and inherent powers and attributes unless the light of revelation descends upon it.

3923. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that if believers really wish to establish real and permanent connection with God, the best way to achieve it is to seek His help and protection and guidance. In this lies the quintessence of the Message which all Divine Prophets have given to the world.

3924. Commentary :

True and unadulterated belief in God's Oneness and Unity is the pivotal and primal fact of all religions.

54. Have they bequeathed this *attitude* as a legacy to one another? Nay, they are *all* a rebellious people.³⁹²⁵

55. So turn away from them; and there will be no blame on thee.

56. And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.

57. And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.³⁹²⁶

اتَّوَصَّوْا بِهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِمَلُومٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾

3925. Commentary :

So strikingly similar are the charges levelled against Divine Reformers by their opponents in all ages that it seems they bequeathed it as a legacy to their successors to go on repeating those accusations.

3926. Important Words :

ليعبدون (they may worship Me) is derived from عبد الله ('abada). عبد الله means, he served, worshipped or adored God alone or he rendered to God humble obedience. عبد ('aboda) means, he was or became a slave, his forefathers having been so before him. عبد به means, he clave to it or him. عبده ('abbada) means, he enslaved him; he subdued him so that he did the work of slaves. عبد الطريق means, he trod the road so as to make it even or easy to walk or ride upon. عبد البعير means, he subdued or rendered the camel submissive (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary :

The primary signification of the word عبادة ('Ibādat) as shown under Important Words above, is to subject oneself to a rigorous spiritual discipline, working with all one's inherent powers and capacities to their fullest scope, in perfect harmony with and in obedience to God's design, so as to receive the Divine impress and thus

be able to manifest in oneself God's attributes. This is, as stated in the present verse, the great and noble aim and object of man's creation and this is exactly what worship of God means. The external and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that of God-given faculties the highest is the one which awakens in man the urge to search after God and incites in him the noble desire completely to submit himself to His will. This being the great object of man's existence the Qur'ān has not failed to prescribe ways and means to attain it.

The first means towards the attainment of this end is right knowledge and firm faith in a Living God and the recognition and realization of His beauty and goodness, because beauty and goodness are the two incentives to love (1 : 2—4 & 14 : 35).

Another important means to realize this noble end is prayer. Repeated stress has been laid upon prayer in the Qur'ān because man can reach God only with Divine help and assistance (40 : 61).

Without *mūjāhadah* it is idle even to conceive of attaining this end. *Mūjāhadah* consists in seeking God by spending one's money and time and applying one's faculties, and

58. I desire no sustenance from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me.³⁹²⁷

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ ۝

59. Surely, it is Allah *Himself* Who is the Great Sustainer, the Lord of Power, the Strong.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ۝

60. So the fate of those who do wrong shall surely be like the fate of their fellows of old; so let them not ask Me to hasten on *the punishment*.³⁹²⁸

فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُنُوبًا مِثْلَ ذُنُوبِ أَصْحَابِهِمْ

فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ۝

46 : 15 ; 20 : 133.

sacrificing one's life as well as using one's knowledge and wisdom in the cause of God (9 : 41; 2 : 4 & 29 : 70).

Fitful or lop-sided effort produces no lasting results. It is unwavering perseverance and constancy in his endeavours which are needed for a spiritual wayfarer to reach his goal. He should be indefatigable and untiring in the way in which he walks and should remain steadfast under hardest trials (41 : 31). When adversities encompass a man all around and when he is threatened with loss of life, property and honour in the way of God, and death stares him in the face and the last ray of hope departs, it is then that perseverance must be shown (2 : 208). It is such perseverance that leads one to God.

Another important means to attain this supreme object is to keep company with the righteous and to imitate their example because man is by nature inclined to imitate a model and he constantly feels the need of it (9 : 119).

Last but perhaps the most important factor which helps man to attain this great and noble object are pure dreams, visions and revelations from God. As the road which leads to God is

very mysterious and intricate and is full of difficulties and dangers, the spiritual wayfarer may depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The grace of God, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey with inspiring visions and revelations, and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly. Thus strengthened he proceeds upon his journey with great vigour and zeal (10 : 65).

3927. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that if the spiritual way-farer pursues his course towards the noble object of his life steadfastly and with perseverance, he does no good to God, or to anybody else, but himself profits from it and attains the object of his quest. It is in a life led in obedience to, and harmony with, Divine laws that lie his spiritual development and the attainment of everlasting and eternal life.

3928. Important Words :

ذنب (lot) is derived from ذنب. They say ذنبه i.e., he followed his tail, not quitting his

61. "Woe, then, to those who disbelieve, because of that day of theirs which they have been promised.

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ يَوْمِهِمُ الَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

^aI4 : 3; 19 : 38; 38 : 28.

track. ذنوب means; a great bucket; a bucket full of water or nearly full of water (an empty bucket is called دلو) ; fate, lot, share or portion; requital. The word also signifies a day of prolonged evil (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their evil course, they will meet with a fate similar to that of the opponents of former Prophets. Like them they will come to a sad end.

CHAPTER 52

AL - T Ū R

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūra*, like its two predecessors, was revealed at Mecca in the early period of the Call. Noldeke places it after Chapter 51, while according to Muir it was revealed somewhat later. The contents of the *Sūra* show that it was revealed at a time when opposition to Islam had become severe and persistent, and even plots had begun to be hatched against the life of the Holy Prophet. The *Sūra* has 50 verses and takes its title from its second verse.

In the preceding *Sūra* attention was drawn to the great spiritual revolution which was to be brought about by the Qur'ān. It was in the fitness of things and quite in accordance with the laws of nature (the *Sūra* stated) that because men had become corrupt and had forsaken God, a new Revelation should have come, like rain that descends upon dry land at the proper time and quickens it into a new life. The *Sūra* had ended on the note that like former Prophets the Holy Prophet will meet with severe opposition, but the cause of Truth will triumph and disbelievers will be punished. The present *Sūra* refers also to the Biblical prophecies about the Holy Prophet and warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their opposition they will be seized with Divine punishment.

Summary

The *Sūra* opens with a direct and emphatic reference to the prophecies about the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet in the Bible, and states that the Bible, the Qur'ān and the Ka'ba all bear evidence to the truth of Islam and the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to warn disbelievers that opposition to truth is never productive of good results and that their power would be broken and disgrace and humiliation would be their lot. But those righteous servants of God who accept the Divine Teaching and mould their lives in accordance with it would receive Divine favours. Not only they but also those of their children who followed in their footsteps and led righteous lives would be made to join with them in the Abode of Eternity.

Next, the *Sūra* says that the Holy Prophet is neither a soothsayer, nor a madman or a poet but a true Messenger of God, because the great moral and spiritual revolution brought about by him could not be the work of a madman or a poet; nor could the great Divine Book—the Qur'ān—that has been revealed to him, be the work of a forger of lies or a fabricator. The Qur'ān has been revealed by the Great Creator of the heavens and the earth. The Prophet seeks no reward from them nor would their plans against him succeed because he is under God's protection. On the contrary, Divine punishment would overtake disbelievers and the time of their chastisement is fast approaching.

سُورَةُ الطُّورِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٥٢)

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.^{a3929}

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Mount^b;³⁹³⁰

وَالطُّورِ ②

3. And by the Book inscribed;³⁹³¹

وَكِتَابٍ مَّسْطُورٍ ③

4. On parchment unfolded;³⁹³²

فِي رَاقٍ مَّنْشُورٍ ④

5. And by the Frequented House;³⁹³³

وَالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُورِ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b95 : 3.

3929. Commentary :

See 1 : 1

3930. Commentary :

The particle *واو* may mean: "I swear;" "I cite as witness;" etc. For the philosophy, importance and significance of oaths, see 37 : 2; 51 : 2 & 91 : 2.

الطور (the Mount) stands for mount Sinai. For a collective note on vv. 2—7 see v. 7 below.

3931. Commentary :

The expression "a Book inscribed," may refer to both the Qur'ān and the Book of Moses, preferably to the former.

3932. Important Words :

رق (parchment) is substantive noun from رق (*raqqa*) which means, it was or became thin, delicate in texture. رق means, fine parchment; white or fine piece of paper or skin, used for the purpose of writing on it (Lane).

Commentary :

The words "parchment unfolded," qualify the expression, "the Book inscribed," which stands for the Qur'ān or the Book of Moses.

3933. Important Words :

المعمور (Frequentated) is derived from عمر. They say عمر بالمكان *i.e.* he stayed in the house or he occupied, tenanted or inhabited it. عمر البناء means, he kept the building in a good state. عمر المكان means, he visited the place. دار معمور means, an inhabited or a visited or frequented house. عمر ربه (*'ammara*) means, he worshipped his Creator (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The words "the Frequentated House," may refer to the Tabernacle that Moses had constructed in the wilderness where the Israelites worshipped, or to the Temple at Jerusalem, or to any sacred house of worship. But preferably it refers to the Ka'ba which is described in the Qur'ān also as "a Resort" (2 : 126); "the Sacred House" (5 : 3); "the Sacred Mosque" (17 : 2); "the Ancient House" (22 : 30); and "the Town of Security" (95 : 4); etc.

6. And *by* the Elevated Roof;³⁹³⁴

وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ ۝٦

7. And *by* the Swollen Sea^{a, 3935}

وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُورِ ۝٧

481 : 7.

3934. Commentary :

'The Elevated Roof' may also refer to the Tabernacle which Moses set up in the wilderness in the form of a canopy under which the Israelites worshipped. Or it may refer to the Ka'ba or to the sky or heaven, the last reference being more appropriate and relevant.

3935. Important Words :

المسجور (swollen) is derived from سجر . They say سجر الماء النهر *i.e.*, the water filled the stream. سجر التنور (*sajjara*) means, he filled the oven with firewood and heated it. سجر الماء means, he made the water to flow forth whithersoever it would. مسجور means, filled; kindled; still or quiet, or still and full at the same time; empty (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

It is characteristic of the Qur'ān that when it has to make a firm declaration and impart emphasis and certainty to that declaration it swears by, or cites as witnesses, certain beings or objects or natural laws or phenomena. In the first few verses the *Sūra* swears by certain things intimately connected with Moses—the counterpart of the Holy Prophet. It was on the Ṭur that the revelation was vouchsafed to Moses which embodied his Law and the prophecies which spoke about the appearance of a great Divine Prophet from among the brethren of the Israelites. That Prophet was to be the like of Moses and was to shine forth from mount Paran and to come with ten thousand saints, holding in his right hand a fiery law (Deut. 18 : 18 & 33 : 2). Evidently, the Holy

Prophet was the Divine Messenger spoken of in the prophecy. His advent is likened in the Qur'ān to the advent of Moses (73 : 16). He shined forth from mount Paran, holding the Qur'ān in his right hand and entered Mecca at the head of ten thousand saintly warriors. The *Sūra* then cites, as evidence, the "Inscribed Book" which is the Bible or the Qur'ān, preferably the latter, and which stands as a standing and incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the claims of the Holy Prophet. "The Frequent House"—the Ka'ba,—more than anything else, shows that the religion of which it forms the citadel and the centre is God's final Dispensation. The site where the Ka'ba stands was a dry barren waste where no sign of human or animal life was visible. Here, long centuries ago, a holy man of God—the Patriarch Abraham, aided and assisted by his son, Ishmael, while raising its foundations, had prayed that the place may become a haven of safety and security and may constitute the centre from where God's Unity and Oneness may be proclaimed and preached. It was "this barren waste that didst not bear and didst not travail with child" which gave birth to the Greatest Son of man, as was spoken of old (Isa. 54 : 1). Here it was (as was foretold) that "the glory of God rose and shone; the multitudes of camels came, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, all came from Sheba and brought gold and incense and shewed forth the praises of the Lord" (Isa. 60 : 1-6).

The reference in the words "the Elevated Roof," being to heaven, the verse (v. 6) signifies

8. The punishment of thy Lord shall certainly come to pass;^{a3936}

9. There is none that can avert it.

10. On the day when the heaven will be in a state of terrific commotion,³⁹³⁷

11. And the mountains will move fast,^{b3938}

12. Then woe that day to those who reject the truth,

13. Who indulge in idle talk for pastime.

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۝٨

مَا لَهُ مِنْ دَافِعٍ ۝٩

يَوْمَ تَنُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوَرًا ۝١٠

وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا ۝١١

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝١٢

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي خَوْضٍ يَلْعَبُونَ ۝١٣

^a51 : 6. ^b18 : 48; 78 : 21; 81 : 4.

that the disbelievers are so unwise as not to see this simple fact that whereas the Prophet continuously receives Divine help and his cause progresses and prospers, failure dogs their footsteps and all their designs and plans against the Prophet prove abortive. In the words "the Swollen Sea," the reference may be to the Mediterranean Sea where Pharaoh and his mighty hosts were drowned while pursuing the Israelites or they may refer to the battlefield of Badr where all the great leaders of the Quraish were killed, as it was known as البحر *i.e.*, the sea (Niḥāyah). The words may also apply to the Qur'ān which like a fathomless sea of spiritual knowledge continues to throw out treasures of Divine knowledge. "Why do not the disbelievers," the verse purports to say, "take a lesson from these patent facts and realize that opposition to God's Messengers does not pay and will end in their ruin?"

3936. Commentary :

All the facts mentioned in the preceding six verses show that if disbelievers do not give up

their evil ways and opposition to the Holy Prophet, Divine punishment would descend upon them and would break them to pieces. "The punishment of thy Lord," may also refer to the punishment of the Day of Resurrection.

3937. Commentary :

The verse may signify that on that day all the heavenly forces will operate in favour of the Holy Prophet. So did it happen on the Day of Badr.

3938. Commentary :

The verse means that on the day of retribution the leaders of disbelievers will meet with a terrible end. They will be blown away like chaf before the wind. Or it may signify that the Iranian and Byzantine Empires will be broken and shattered. This and the preceding verse make a subtle allusion to the new order of things before which the old decrepit and decayed systems would be swept away. These verses may also apply to the Day of Judgment.

14. The day when they shall be thrust into the fire of Hell with a *violent* thrust.^{a3939}

15. 'This is the Fire which you treated as a lie.'^b

16. 'Is this then magic, or do you still not see?'³⁹⁴⁰

17. 'Burn ye therein; and whether you show patience or you show it not, it will be the same for you.'^c You are requited *only* for what you used to do.³⁹⁴¹

18. 'Verily, the righteous will surely be in Gardens and in Bliss.'³⁹⁴²

19. Enjoying what their Lord has bestowed on them; and their Lord will save them from the torment of the Fire.

يَوْمَ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعَاً^{١٣}

هَذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ^{١٤}

أَفَسِحْرُ هَذَا أَمْ أَنْتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ^{١٥}

إِصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ^{١٦}

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَعِيمٍ^{١٧}

فَلَهُنَّ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مَّرْبُومَةٌ وَوَقَّهْمَ رَبُّهُمُ

عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ^{١٨}

^a18 : 54; 21 : 40; 38 : 86. ^b51 : 15; 55 : 44. ^c14 : 22; 41 : 25.

^d7 : 44; 15 : 46; 19 : 64; 43 : 73-74; 44 : 56; 77 : 42-43; 78 : 32-33.

3939. Commentary :

The dead bodies of leaders of the Quraish who were killed in the Battle of Badr were thrown into a pit and the Holy Prophet went up to its edge and, addressing the dead bodies, is reported to have said "Did you find the promise of punishment of your Lord true. What God had promised me has been fulfilled" (Bukhārī & Ṭabrī). The verse is equally applicable to the punishment which will be meted out to disbelievers on the Resurrection Day.

3940. Commentary :

When disbelievers will be confronted with the consequences of their evil deeds on the Day of Reckoning, they will be asked if they had realized that what God's Messengers had told them was not a fake or forgery, or whether

they still did not see the utter futility and falsity of their beliefs and doctrines. The verse may also refer to the day of reckoning for disbelievers in this life.

3941. Commentary :

The verse depicts the disbelievers' condition after their guilt will be fully established and the time for repentance will have passed.

3942. Commentary :

The present and the following verses recount some of the Divine favours and blessings that are bestowed on the righteous. These may also be taken as embodying a prophecy which was literally fulfilled when the dwellers of the barren and sandy deserts of Arabia conquered the great Iranian and Byzantine Empires.

20. *And will say to them, 'Eat and drink in happiness because of what you used to do.*

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

21. *"Reclining on couches arranged in rows." ^bAnd We shall consort them with fair maidens having wide, beautiful eyes.*³⁹⁴³

مُتَكِّينَ عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُم بِحُورٍ

عَيْنٍ ﴿٣١﴾

^a18 : 32; 55 : 55; 76 : 14.

^b44 : 55; 56 : 23.

3943. Important Words :

زوج الشيئ بالشئى (We shall consort). زوجنا (zawwaja) means, he paired or coupled a thing with a thing; united it as its fellow or like. يزوجهم ذكرانا واناثا means, He mixes them males and females; He makes them pairs, males or females; He makes them in different sorts or sexes (42 : 51). اذا النفوس زوجت means, when the souls shall be united or when people are brought together. زوج means, any sort of thing; sort or species; a woman's husband or a man's wife; mate, consort, comrade; class. أزواج (plural) means, species; classes or groups; mates; pairs; etc. (Lane, Aqrab, Tāj & Mufradāt). احشروا الذين ظلموا و أزواجهم means, assemble those who acted wrongly along with their companions (37 : 23).

حور is the plural of both أحور and حوراء which are derived from حار. They say حار الثوب i.e., he washed the cloth and made it white. أحور (fem. حوراء) means, a man whose eyes are characterized by the quality termed حور (hawarun) i.e., intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof, with intense whiteness or fairness of the rest of the person. أحور also means, pure or clear intellect. ما يعيش بأحور is said of a person whose affairs are not clean (Lane, Mufradāt & Tāj).

عين is the plural of both أعين (a'yan) and عينا which are derived from عين

(‘ayina) which means, he had wide black eyes. أعين and عينا respectively mean, man and woman having black, wide and large eyes. عينا also means, a good or beautiful saying or word (Lane, Mufradāt & Tāj).

Commentary :

Description of the rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell as given in some Quranic Sūras, particularly in Al-Raḥmān, Al-Wāqiah and in the present Sūra call for an explanatory note. The following points may be borne in mind for an appreciation of life after death :

1. According to the Qur’ān, God’s handiwork as manifested in the creation of the universe, and in that of man placed at its centre, shows that man’s life on earth has a purpose higher and nobler and beyond mere eating and drinking or leading a more or less circumscribed existence (23 : 115—116).

2. There is a life after death and that life is the continuation of the life which man leads in this world. One’s heaven or hell begins from this very world; death only opening up vast and unknown vistas of ever-expanding spiritual progress.

3. As soon as the human soul leaves this tabernacle of clay, it is given a new body, because the soul can make no progress or enjoy no bliss or feel no pain without a body. Its development and progress depend upon its permanent

connection with a body. The new body is as fine and delicate as the soul was in this world. In fact, it is the very soul in a new transformation which after having passed through certain experiences develops a new soul which possesses far higher and finer and more delicate faculties and perception than the soul from which it emanates. To this new soul the old soul serves as a body and man is able to perceive things through his new senses which he could perceive formerly only through the soul, and is able to partake of the pains and pleasures of the next world—the present body of clay being quite unfit for the new experience. That is why the Qur’ān says, “And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them, as a reward for their good works” (32 : 18). And the Holy Prophet explained this Quranic verse in a well-known saying, *viz.*, “No eye has seen the blessings of Paradise, nor has any ear heard of them nor can human mind conceive of them” (Bukhārī, *kitāb bad’al-khalq*).

4. Life after death is only an image and manifestation of the present life and the rewards and punishments of the next world would be only embodiments and images of the actions done in this life. Heaven and Hell are not new material worlds which come from outside. It is true that they shall be visible and palpable, call them material, if you please, but they are only embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. The spiritual torture of this world has been represented in the Qur’ān as a physical punishment in the next. The chains to be put round the necks of disbelievers, for instance, represent the desires of this world which keep a man’s head bent upon the earth, and it is these

desires that shall assume the shape of chains. Similarly, the entanglements of this world shall be seen as fetters on the feet in the next. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire, and the love which a believer feels for his Lord and Creator will appear embodied as wine in the life to come, etc. Thus there will be gardens, streams, milk, honey, flesh of birds, wine, fruits, thrones, companions and many other things in Paradise; but they will not be the things of this world but the embodiments of spiritual facts of the life of this world.

5. There will be no sin, levity, or vain talk in Paradise, no pleasures of the flesh as we understand them, but all-pervading peace and pleasure of God (56 : 26-27). In view of this Quranic conception of Paradise, it is the height of ignorance or blind prejudice to suggest that the Qur’ān promises a sensuous Paradise to its followers.

Moreover, the words عین اور حور زوجنا as explained under Important Words above, present no difficulty and, in view of these explanations, the verse may mean that in Paradise the righteous servants of God will be made to live with pure and clean companions whose faces will be shining with radiant spiritual beauty; or they will have as companions fair maidens *i.e.*, their wives.

Besides, the promise, made to the righteous in this and the following verses, was literally fulfilled when the Muslims conquered vast territories of the Byzantine and Iranian Empires, and all these things fell into their hands and thus the promise constituted an incontrovertible testimony to the fact that the promise about the next life is also true.

22. And those who believe and whose children follow them in faith—with them shall We join their children.^a And We will not diminish anything from *the reward* of their works. Every man stands pledged for what he has earned.³⁹⁴⁴

23. And We shall bestow upon them *every kind of fruit*^b and meat such as they will wish for.

24. There they will pass from one to another a cup wherein is neither levity nor sin.^{c3945}

25. ^dAnd there will wait upon them youths of their own, *pure* as though they were pearls well-preserved.³⁹⁴⁶

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ
الْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ
مِنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ ۝١٢

وَأَمَدَدْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كِهَتْهُمُ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ۝١٣

يَتَنَازَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْسِيمٌ ۝١٤

وَيُطَوَّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ
مَّكَنُونٌ ۝١٥

^a40 : 9. ^b55 : 12; 56 : 21. ^c19 : 63; 56 : 26; 78 : 36. ^d56 : 18; 76 : 20.

3944. Important Words :

ذرية (children) is derived from ذر . They say ذر الله عباده في الارض i.e., God spread His servants upon the earth. ذرية used as both singular and plural (ذريات—plural) means, children or offspring of a man, male or female; little ones or young ones; descendants; progenitors or ancestors, women (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

This verse further explains its predecessor. Whereas in the former verse it was stated that the righteous will be made to live with their pure, beautiful wives, this verse explains that their offspring will also be united with them, thus making their joy complete.

The words "Every man stands pledged for what he has earned," remove one possible misunderstanding, viz., that the mere fact of being related to a righteous man would do the believer

no good. It is his own good works that will earn him his place in Paradise. The verse clearly speaks of man's responsibility for his actions.

3945. Important Words :

يتنازعون (will pass from one to another) is derived from نزع . They say نازع فلانا i.e., he shook hands with such a one. نازع الكأس means, he took the cup. تنازعوا الكأس means, they took the cup from one another's hand (Aqrab).

3946. Commentary :

غلمان (youths) is plural of غلام which means, youth; servant; son, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). The word has also been used in the Qur'an synonymously with ولد in the sense of 'son' (3 : 41; 15 : 54; 19 : 8; 37 : 102; 51 : 29). Elsewhere in the Qur'an (76:20) the word ولدان (sons) has been substituted for غلمان which shows that the youths who will move about in

26. And they will turn one to another, asking each other questions.

27. They will say, 'Before this, when we were among our family, we were very much afraid of God's displeasure.'³⁹⁴⁷

28. 'But Allah has been gracious unto us and has saved us from the torment of the burning blast.'

R. 2 29. 'We used to pray to Him before. Surely, He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.'

30. Admonish then. By the grace of thy Lord, thou art neither a sooth-sayer,^b nor a madman.'³⁹⁴⁸

31. Do they say, 'He is a poet';^c we are waiting for some calamity which time will bring upon him?'³⁹⁴⁹

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَدْنَا عَذَابَ السُّومِ ﴿٢٨﴾

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدُوعُهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٌ وَلَا جَاهِنٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمُنُونِ ﴿٣١﴾

^a44 : 57. ^b69 : 43. ^c21 : 6; 69 : 42.

the company of the righteous in Paradise will be their own sons. The verse may also refer to the Divine promise of great wealth and power coming into the possession of the poor Muslims, and to the hosts of servants who were to wait upon them.

3947. Commentary :

Besides the meaning given in the text the verse may also signify : "Being surrounded by enemies, their threats would sometimes frighten and terrify us. But now we enjoy perfect peace and security."

3948. Commentary :

In the foregoing verses prophecies in former revealed Scriptures, particularly in the Book of Moses, were advanced as arguments to support and substantiate the truth of the Qur'ān being the revealed Word of God. Those prophecies spoke of the appearance of a Prophet in the wilderness of Mecca and having a "fiery Law"

in his right hand (Deut. 33 : 2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.

3949. Important Words :

ريب (calamity) is inf. noun from راب . They say رابني i.e., it or he occasioned in me disquiet or agitation of mind; he made me to doubt; he did with me what I disliked or hated. ريب means, doubt; disquietude or uneasiness of mind; doubt combined with evil opinion; calamity; misery (Lane & Aqrab).

المنون (time) is derived from من (manna). They say من الرجل i.e., he weakened the man and took away his strength; من الحبل means, he cut off the rope. من الشيء means, the thing diminished. من الناقة means, he tired out or jaded the she-camel. منون means, death; ريب الزمان or ريب المنون means, time; destiny or fate.

32. Say, "Await ye then. I too am with you among those who are waiting."³⁹⁵⁰

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ ط

33. Do their intellect *and reason* enjoin this upon them or are they a rebellious people?³⁹⁵¹

أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُمْ بِهَذَا أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ ط
طَاعُونَ ط

a9 : 52; 32 : 31.

or ريب الدهر means, the calamities or vicissitudes of time (Lane).

تربص (we are waiting for) is derived from ربص. They say ربص به i.e. he waited for good or evil, particularly the latter, to befall him. تربص به الامر means, he expected or waited for the event to befall him (Lane & Aqrab). An Arab poet says :

تربص بها ريب المنون لعلها
تطلق يوما او يموت حليلها

i.e., wait thou for the vicissitudes of time to befall her; perhaps she might be divorced some day or her husband might die (Lane).

Commentary :

The Holy Prophet's enemies accused him of being a soothsayer, a poet and even a madman. The verse implies the refutation of all these foolish charges. The Prophet is not a poet (the verse purports to say) because poets have no fixed ideal or programme in life. They only indulge in day-dreaming, and as it were, "wander about distractedly in every valley" (26 : 226), but the Holy Prophet has before him a great and noble aim—the regeneration of a corrupt and degenerate society. He is neither a soothsayer, because soothsayers dabble in occult sciences and make mere conjectures and guesses. They try to hoodwink simple-minded people by clever contrivances but the Holy Prophet is universally known to be an honest and

sincere man. Nor is he a madman because madmen are not known to have brought about the great and wonderful revolution that he has, among his completely demoralized, degenerate and degraded people.

3950. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that disbelievers call the Holy Prophet a poet, who indulges in building castles in the air about his great future, a soothsayer who plays upon the credulity of simple-minded folk, a raving maniac and, as such, naturally they expect that sooner or later he will come to a sad end. The Prophet is enjoined to tell them that they will have to wait till Doomsday for the realization of their futile expectations. Time alone will decide the issue between them.

3951. Commentary :

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically. Even after seeing that the Holy Prophet has given a Teaching which has brought about such a wonderful revolution among his people and that his mission is meeting with rapid and progressive success, does the disbelievers' intellect lead them to the conclusion that he is a poet, a soothsayer or a madman? Is it their reason that has misled them or have they thrown all restraint and moderation to the winds, and in rejecting the Divine Message have transgressed all legitimate bounds?

34. "Do they say, 'He has fabricated it?' Nay, but they would not believe.³⁹⁵²

35. Let them, then, bring forth a discourse like this, if they speak the truth'.³⁹⁵³

36. Have they been created for nothing, or are they themselves the creators?³⁹⁵⁴

37. Did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no faith.

38. Do they own the treasures of thy Lord^c, or are they the guardians thereof?³⁹⁵⁵

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُ بَلْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

فَلْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِثْلَهُ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصَيِّطُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

^a2 : 24; 10 : 39; 11 : 14; 17 : 89.

^b56 : 60.

^c38 : 10.

3952. Important Words :

تَقَوَّلَ (he has forged) is derived from قَالَ *i.e.*, he said. عَلَيَّ يَقُولُ means, he lied against me; he attributed to me a thing which I did not say (Lane & Aqrab).

3953. Commentary :

The verse refutes the disbelievers' allegation of forgery against the Holy Prophet. If the Prophet (the verse seems to hold out a challenge to them) receives no revelations from God and the Qur'ān is his own fabrication, then let them produce a book like it which should possess such a simple and beautiful style and inapproachably exquisite diction as the Qur'ān, and should thoroughly and effectively deal with all the complex and difficult moral and spiritual human problems, and should satisfy the multitudinous and multifarious needs of man, and should exert such powerful influence on the lives of its followers, and, above all, should be the repository of all eternal truths and imperishable teachings. The disbelievers are further challenged to produce a book like the

Qur'ān with their combined and concerted effort, calling in "all the men and jinn" to help and assist them. The Qur'ān emphatically asserts that they will not be able to produce such a book because the Qur'ān is God's own revealed Word. See also 2 : 24; 14 : 25 and 17 : 89.

3954. Commentary :

"Do they think," the verse appears to tell disbelievers, "that they have been created without a cause or purpose, or that they are their own creators." If that is not the case and God is their Creator, and their creation serves a noble and sublime purpose, and the Qur'ān has been revealed to help them to attain that noble object, then why do they not accept it?"

3955. Commentary :

God has been Gracious and Merciful to men, in that He has sent the Holy Prophet and has revealed the Qur'ān to him that they may understand the object of their life and, by following him, may attain it and establish a true and real connection with God. But they refuse to escape

39. Have they a ladder by means of which they can *ascend into heaven and* overhear? Then let their listener bring a manifest authority.³⁹⁵⁶

أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَعِينُونَ فِيهِ فَيَلْتَمِسُونَ مُسْتَعِينَهُمْ
بِأُطْلُغٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

40. "Has He daughters and for you are sons?³⁹⁵⁷

أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنَاتُ وَلَكُمْ الْبَنُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. 'Dost thou ask a reward from them, so that they are weighed down with a load of debt?³⁹⁵⁸

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَغْرَمٍ مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42. Do they possess *knowledge of the unseen*, so that they write it down?

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. Do they intend a plot? But it is those who disbelieve that will be the victims of their plot.³⁹⁵⁹

أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُمْ الْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

^a6 : 101; 37 : 154; 43 : 17; 53 : 22.

^b23 : 73; 68 : 47.

^c68 : 48.

^d86 : 16-17.

him, thinking him to be too low to be entitled to demand and command their allegiance. The verse answers this objection of disbelievers by telling them that God in His infallible wisdom has chosen the Prophet to be humanity's infallible Guide and Teacher. How can they dare arrogate to themselves the right and role of being the distributors or guardians of the treasures of God's mercy.

3956. **Commentary :**

In these verses (vv. 30—44) untenability and futility of their position in rejecting the Holy Prophet has been brought home to disbelievers. The present verse further tells them that if they claim to have access to the secrets of the heavens, then let them produce authority for the allegation that the Holy Prophet is not the appointed Messenger of God.

3957. **Commentary :**

It is repugnant (says the verse) to God's Unity, that He should be attributed with having even a son, and yet the disbelievers have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth is considered by them a mark of humiliation and disgrace.

3958. **Commentary :**

The verse seems to appeal to the good sense of disbelievers and purports to say to them that when, out of a sincere solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being, the Prophet calls them to the ways of righteousness and asks for no reward for his labours, then why do they not accept him? On the contrary, they oppose and persecute him.

3959. **Important Words :**

كيد (a plot) is inf. noun from كاد, i.e., he contrived, devised or plotted a thing whether right or wrong. They say كاده i.e., he deceived him, beguiled or circumvented him; he taught him how to deceive or cheat; he fought him. كيد means, deceit, cunning, stratagem; war (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers are hatching plots against Islam but their plots will recoil on their own heads. The word كيد meaning war, as it has been used in the Qur'an about the Battle of Badr, the reference

44. Have they a god other than Allah? Exalted is Allah above all that which they associate *with Him*'.³⁹⁶⁰

45. "And if they should see a piece of the sky falling down, they would say, *Just clouds piled up*."³⁹⁶¹

46. ^bSo leave them until they meet that day of theirs, on which they will be overtaken by a thunderbolt.³⁹⁶²

47. The day when their plotting will not avail them aught, nor shall they be helped.

أَمْ لَهُمْ آلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَأِنْ يَّرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي فِيهِ يُصْعَقُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

يَوْمَ لَا يَغْنِي عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

^a46 : 25. ^b23 : 55; 52 : 46; 70 : 43.

in the verse may be particularly to that battle (8 : 19). According to some Commentators of the Qur'ān, the next three verses also refer to it.

3960. Commentary :

In the preceding verse disbelievers were warned that they themselves would fall victims to the plots they were hatching against Islam. In this verse they are told that when the day of decision arrives, their false gods would not be able to render them any help, nor would they be able to help themselves, that idolatry would disappear from Arabia and the country would resound with Divine alleluias.

3961. Commentary :

In the two previous verses disbelievers were warned that Divine punishment was about to overtake them. But such is their state of utter heedlessness and false sense of security (says the verse) that they do not benefit by the timely

Divine warning, so that even if they see a piece of the sky actually falling upon them, they would deceive themselves by considering it as a piece of God's mercy in the form of 'piled-up clouds.' The disbelievers go so far as to challenge the Prophet to "cause a portion of the sky to fall upon us if thou art truthful" (26 : 188).

3962. Commentary :

The words 'that day of theirs' have been taken to refer to the Day of Badr. On that day a well-equipped Quraish army received a crushing defeat at the hands of a small, ill-armed and ill-equipped band of Muslims. The defeat came as a veritable bolt from the blue for the Quraish. The verse may equally refer to the day of the fall of Mecca when the Quraish were completely unnerved at seeing the Muslim army of ten thousand strong at the very gates of the city.

48. "And verily, for those who do wrong there is a punishment besides that. But most of them know not."³⁹⁶³

وَأَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا عَذَابًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

49. So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord; for assuredly thou art before Our eyes;^b and glorify thy Lord with *His* praise when thou risest up *from sleep*.³⁹⁶⁴

وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٤٠﴾

50. "And for part of the night *also* do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَإِدْبَارَ النُّجُومِ ﴿٤١﴾

^a32 : 22. ^b5 : 68. ^e17 : 80; 50 : 41; 73 : 3—5; 76 : 27.

3963. Important Words :

دون (besides) among other things means; before and behind in respect of place or time; at, near, nearby; with or present with; other than, beside or besides (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

If يوم (day) in the preceding verse be taken to refer to the Day of Badr, the expression دون ذلك would signify the Divine punishment that overtook the Meccan disbelievers in the form of the destructive "seven year famine," etc. But if يوم may refer to the Day of

Judgment, the expression would mean the punishments that come upon disbelievers in this life.

3964. Commentary :

'The judgment of thy Lord' may signify the punishment that was soon to overtake disbelievers, and the words "thou art before Our eyes" mean that the Holy Prophet was under Divine protection and plotting of the enemies could do him no harm. The reference is to the promise of protection given to him in the words: "And Allah will protect thee from men" (5 : 68).

CHAPTER 53

AL-NAJM

(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation and Context

The *Sūra* takes its title from the very first word of its text. It is a Meccan *Sūra*, having been revealed, according to overwhelming scholarly opinion, in the 5th year of the Call, shortly after the first emigration to Abyssinia which took place in the month of Rajab of that year.

Whereas the preceding *Sūra* had ended on the injunction contained in the verse : "And for part of the night also do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars," the present *Sūra* opens with the words, "By the star when it falls." Moreover, in the preceding *Sūra* the truth of the Quranic revelation and of the Divine claim of the Holy Prophet was sought to be established by a fleeting reference to Biblical prophecies and natural phenomena. In the *Sūra* under comment the same subject has been dealt with in a very exquisite and forceful style. It is stated that the Holy Prophet was not only a true Messenger of God but Prophet *par excellence*, and that he was commissioned by God as humanity's last and infallible guide and preceptor.

Summary of the Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with citing the falling of النجم (for an explanation of this word see under v. 2) as an evidence in support of the Divine claim of the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to say: "Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray," because, "The Lord of mighty powers has taught him, the One Possessor of strength." The Prophet, having been initiated into Divine mysteries, and having drunk deep at the fountain of Divine Grace and Knowledge, and of the Realization of God, attained to the highest peak of spiritual eminence to which a human being can conceivably rise. Then he became filled to the fullest extent with the milk of human kindness and sympathy, and, having been thus spiritually equipped, was appointed to preach Divine Unity to a world given to the worship of gods made of wood and stone and creations of man's own imagination. The *Sūra* continues to give very strong, solid and sound arguments from human reason and history, and from the insignificant beginnings of man, in support of the doctrine of the Oneness of God; and condemns idolatry in forceful terms. This foolish doctrine, the *Sūra* declares, is born of lack of true knowledge and rests on baseless conjecture which "avails naught against truth." Next, it says that idolaters should have learned from the life-stories of Abraham, Moses and other Prophets that idolatrous beliefs and practices have always landed mankind into moral and spiritual ruin, and that every man will have to bear his own cross and render account of his actions to God Who is the final goal of all, and Who gives life and causes death, and brings man to life after he is dead and reduced to particles of earth.

The *Sūra* closes on a note of warning to disbelievers that if they persisted in rejection of the Divine Message, they would meet with a sad fate as did the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd and that destruction of falsehood was inevitable and nothing could avert or avoid it.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."³⁹⁶⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the star when it falls,³⁹⁶⁶

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ ②

3. Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray.³⁹⁶⁷

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

3965. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

3966. Important Words :

النجم (the star). The word has been variously interpreted. Generally it means, star or a stemless plant, but when used as a proper noun it signifies "the Pleiades." It is taken by some scholars to signify the gradual revelation of the Qur'ān in pieces, and by some other authorities to refer to the Holy Prophet himself. Its plural النجوم also means, chiefs of a people, or small States or Principalities (Lane, Aqrab, Kashshāf, Tāj & Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān).

هوى (falls). They say هوى الشيئى i.e., the thing fell from a high to a low place ; it rose and ascended. It is said that الهوى (al-hawiyyu) is used for going up and الهوى (al-huwiyyu) for coming down (Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of the word النجم given under Important Words, the verse may refer (1) to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet to the effect that when spiritual darkness will spread over the entire face of the earth and there will remain nothing of Islam but its name and of the Qur'ān but its letters and faith will go up to heavens, a man of the Persian descent, will bring it back to earth

(Tirmidhī & Bukhārī). Or (2) it may signify that the Quranic revelation bears witness to its own truth. Or (3) it may mean that the tender plant of Islam, which now seems to be going down before the strong and adverse winds of opposition that are fiercely blowing against it, would very shortly rise and develop into a mighty tree under whose cool shade great nations would take shelter. Or (4) the verse may mean that as the Arabs are used to determine the course and direction of, and are guided in, their travels by the movements of the stars in the sandy waste of Arabia (16:17), so they would now be led to the goal and end of their spiritual journey by the star *par excellence*, i.e., the Holy Prophet. (5) The verse may also embody a prophecy about the fall of the ramshackle State of Arabia, a prophecy much more explicitly stated in the verse, "The Hour has drawn nigh and the moon is rent asunder" (54 : 2).

3967. Commentary :

The verse signifies that the ideals and principles presented by the Holy Prophet are not wrong (ما ضل), nor has the Prophet in the least deviated from those principles (ما غوى). Thus, both as regards his great ideals, and the way he lives up to them, he is a sure and safe guide. The argument is reinforced in the next few verses.

4. Nor does he speak out of *his own* desire.³⁹⁶⁸

5. It is nothing but *pure* revelation, revealed by *God*.³⁹⁶⁹

6. *The Lord* of Mighty Powers has taught him.³⁹⁷⁰

7. *The One* Possessor of Strength. So He manifested His ascendance *over everything*.³⁹⁷¹

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۝٣

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۝٤

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ۝٥

ذُو مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوَىٰ ۝٦

The words "your companion" seem to imply a subtle rebuke to the Meccan disbelievers, telling them in effect that the Holy Prophet has lived among them a whole life-time and they had always looked upon him as a paragon of honesty, integrity and truthfulness but now they dare impute to him such a heinous sin as forging lies against God (10 : 17). How inconsistent is their attitude?

3968. Commentary :

See next verse.

3969. Commentary :

Whereas the present verse speaks of the Divine source of the Holy Prophet's revelation, the two preceding verses allude to the hallucinations of a deranged mind and to the ideas that proceed from one's own desires and the promptings of the Evil Spirit.

The word *هو* in the verse relates to the Qur'ān.

3970. Important Words :

القوى (powers) is the plural of *قوة* which is inf. noun from *قوى* i.e., he became strong ; vigorous, robust or sturdy. *قوة* means, strength, power, potency, might or force (cont. of *ضعف*) in body and also in intellect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse signifies that the Qur'ān is a

mighty and powerful Revelation before which all former revealed Scriptures pale into insignificance.

3971. Important Words :

مرة (strength) is derived from *مر* i.e., he went or went away. *أمر الجبل* means, he twisted the rope tightly. *استمر مريره* means, his resolution or determination became firm or strong. *استمر بالشيء* means, he became strong enough to bear the thing. *مرة* means, strength; strength of make; strength of intellect; sound judgment and firmness. They say *هو رجل ذو مرة* i.e., he is a strong man or he is possessed of strong intellect and sound judgment and firmness (Lane & Aqrab).

استوى (gained ascendance over everything) is derived from *سوى*. They say *الرجل سوى* i.e., the affair of the man became right or straight. *استوى* means, he became full-grown and mature in body and intellect or he attained the completion of his make and intellect. *استوى على ظهر دابة* means, he was or became firm or became firmly seated or settled himself on the back of his beast. *استوى على الشيء* also means, he gained or had the mastery or complete ascendancy over the thing. *استوى الطعام* means, the food became thoroughly cooked (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 30 & 19 : 11.

8. And He revealed His Word when he was on the uppermost horizon,³⁹⁷²

وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَى ۝

9. Then he drew nearer to God; then he came down to mankind,³⁹⁷³

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى ۝

10. So that he became, as it were, one chord to two bows or closer still.³⁹⁷⁴

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ۝

481 : 24.

Commentary :

The expression ذو مرة , besides the meaning given under Important Words above, signifies : One Whose powers perpetually manifest themselves. The word استوى besides the meaning given in the text may also apply to the Holy Prophet, signifying that the Prophet's physical and intellectual powers have attained their fullest vigour and maturity. For a collective note on this and the next two verses see v. 10.

3972. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet had attained to the highest point in his spiritual ascension when God revealed Himself to him in full Glory and Majesty. Or "the Prophet's being on the uppermost horizon" may signify that the light of Islam was set on a very high place from where it could illumine the whole world.

The word هو may also refer to God. See also verse 10.

3973. Important Words :

دَلَّى (came down) is derived from دَلَا. They say دَلَا الدَّلْوُ i.e., he sent down the bucket in the well; he pulled up or out the bucket from the well. دَلَّى رَجْلَهُ مِنَ السَّرِيرِ (dallā) means, he let down his legs from the couch. دَلَّى الشَّيْءَ means, he made or brought or drew the thing near to another thing. تَدَلَّى means, it was let down, he or it lowered

or came down; he was or became lowly, humble or submissive; he drew near or approached or increased in nearness. (Lane, Aqrab & Lisān).

Commentary :

The verse means that the Holy Prophet attained the utmost nearness to God. See next verse.

3974. Important Words :

قَاب (chord) substantive noun from قَاب (qāba) which means, he was or became near or he approached. قَاب means, the portion of a bow that is between the part that is grasped by the hand and the curved extremity; or from one extremity of the bow to the other; measure or space. The Arabs say بَيْنَهُمَا قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ i.e., between them two is the measure of a bow, which means that there is a very close relationship between them. The Arabic proverb رَمَوْا عَنْ قَوْسٍ وَاحِدٍ i.e., they shot at us from one bow, means, they were unanimous against us. The word thus denotes complete agreement (Lane, Lisān & Zamakhsharī).

Commentary :

Whatever may be the significance of the word قَاب, the expression قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ indicates very close union between two persons. In this sense of the expression the verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet continued to scale the

11. Then He revealed to His servant that which He revealed.³⁹⁷⁵

فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَّا أَوْحَىٰ ۝۱۱

12. The heart of the Prophet was not untrue to that which he saw.

مَا كَذَبَ الْفؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ ۝۱۲

13. Will you then dispute with him about what he saw?³⁹⁷⁶

أَفْتُمِرُّونَ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ۝۱۳

heights of spiritual ascension and to approach near God till all distance between them disappeared and the Prophet became, as it were, "one chord to two bows." The verse reminds of an ancient Arab custom according to which when two persons pledged themselves to firm friendship they would join their bows in such a way that they appeared as one and then they would shoot an arrow from that combined bow; thus indicating that they had become, as it were, one person, and that an attack on one was an attack on the other. If the word *تدلى* be taken to apply to God, the verse would mean that the Holy Prophet went up to God and God came down to him till they both became, as it were, united into one person.

The expression *فكان قاب قوسين* possesses yet another very beautiful and subtle significance, viz., that while on the one hand the Holy Prophet became so completely merged in his Lord and Creator that he became, as it were, His image (*بيكراو شد سراسر صورت رب رحيم*), on the other he came down to mankind and became so full of love, sympathy and solicitude that Divinity and Humanity became united in him, and in the Quranic words he became the central point of the chord of the two bows of Divinity and Humanity.

The words *أو أدنى* signify that the relationship between the Holy Prophet and God became closer and more intimate than could be conceived.

Verses 8—18 describe the Spiritual Ascension (معراج) of the Holy Prophet, when he was spiritually transported to heavens and was vouchsafed the view of a spiritual manifes-

tation of God, and ascended spiritually very close to his Maker. The *M'irāj* was, in fact, a double spiritual experience, comprising the spiritual ascent of the Holy Prophet, and the descent towards him of God's manifestation.

The *M'irāj* (Spiritual Ascension) has become confused in popular mind with *Isrā'* (اسرا or Spiritual Night Journey of the Prophet to Jerusalem), from which it is quite distinct and separate. The *Isrā'* took place in the eleventh or twelfth year of the Call (Zurqāni) while the Holy Prophet had the experience of the *Mi'rāj* or Spiritual Ascension to Heavens in its 5th year, shortly after the first emigration to Abyssinia, six or seven years earlier. A careful and minute study of the details of these two incidents mentioned in the *Hadith* also supports this view. For a detailed exposition of the two incidents,—the *Mi'rāj* and the *Isrā'*,—being separate and distinct from each other, see 17 : 2.

3975. Important Words :

ما (what) is sometimes used, to denote honour, surprise, or for emphasis. ما أحسن زيدا means, how beautiful Zaid is. ما فتى فلان means, an excellent youth is such a one (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that God revealed to His servant, and what an excellent and mighty revelation it was !

3976. Commentary :

The verse implies that what the Holy Prophet had seen was his real personal experience; it was veritable truth and no figment of his imagination.

14. And certainly, he saw Him a second time *also*,³⁹⁷⁷

15. Near the farthest Lote-tree,³⁹⁷⁸

16. Near which is the Garden of Eternal Abode.

17. *This was* when that which covers covered the Lote-tree.³⁹⁷⁹

18. The eye deviated not, nor did it wander.³⁹⁸⁰

19. Surely, he saw the greatest of the Signs of his Lord.

20. Now tell *me* about Lat and 'Uzzā.

21. And Manāt, the third one, another *goddess*'!³⁹⁸¹

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۖ

عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۖ

عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ۖ

إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ۖ

مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ۖ

لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَىٰ ۖ

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۖ

وَمَنْوَةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْاُخْرَىٰ ۖ

3977. Commentary :

The verse means that the Holy Prophet's vision was a double spiritual experience.

3978. Important Words :

سِدْرَة (lote-tree) is derived from سدر which means, he was or became confounded, perplexed or dumbfounded. سدر (sadirā) means, bewildered, perplexed, confounded. سدر (sadirun) means, the sea (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of the root-meaning of the word سدر the verse may signify that in his Spiritual Ascension (معراج), the Holy Prophet had reached a high stage of nearness to God which was beyond human mind to conceive; or it may signify that at that stage a sea of endless vistas of Divine knowledge and eternal realities and verities opened out before him.

Or the verse may possess a symbolic allusion to the fact that Divine knowledge vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet would, like the lote-tree, give comfort and shelter to the tired and

jaded limbs of the spiritual wayfarer. Or it may possess a prophetic reference to the tree under which the Companions of the Holy Prophet took the oath of fealty at his hands at the time of the Truce of Hudaibiya. Moreover, as the leaves of the lote-tree possess the quality of safeguarding a dead body from corruption, the verse may signify that the Teaching revealed to the Holy Prophet not only is itself immune against corruption but is eminently fitted to save and preserve mankind from moral corruption.

3979. Commentary :

The words "that which covers," signify the manifestation of God.

3980. Commentary :

The verse sheds a flood of light on the bed-rock of certainty and invincible faith on which the Holy Prophet stood.

3981. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse imply a subtle rebuke to the disbelievers. After having declared the Glory, Majesty and Dignity of God in

the former verses, these two verses seem to say to them that, instead of adoring such a Mighty and Powerful Creator and Lord, they stoop so low as to worship gods made of wood and stone.

It may be noted here that some prejudiced Christian critics of the Holy Prophet have woven quite a fantastic and foolish story of his having fallen a victim to the machinations of Satan. It is stated that one day at Mecca, when the Holy Prophet recited this *Sūra* and as in his recitation he came upon these verses, before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, Satan contrived to put in his mouth the words: *تلك الغرائق العلى وان شفاعتهن لترجي* *i.e.*, these are exalted goddesses and their intercession is hoped for (Zurqānī). The critics call it the "lapse of Muḥammad" or his "compromise with idolatry" and seem to rely upon Wāqidī—that inveterate liar and fabricator of reports—or on Ṭabarī, who is generally regarded as a credulous and indiscriminate narrator of events, for this entirely baseless story. These gentlemen have the audacity to attribute this blasphemous utterance to that great iconoclast (the Holy Prophet) whose whole life was spent in denouncing and condemning idolatry and who carried out his noble mission with unremitting vigour and fearless devotion, spurning all offers of compromise with idol-worship, and whom blandishments, bribes, cajolery or intimidation failed to move an inch from his set purpose, and to whose unshakable firmness against idolatry the Almighty Himself has borne testimony in the words: *ودوا لو تدهن فيدهنون* *i.e.*, it is their intense desire that thou shouldst show some pliancy so that they may also be pliant (68 : 10).

Moreover, the whole context gives the direct lie to this baseless assertion. Not only do the verses that follow but the whole *Sūra* contains an unsparing condemnation of idolatry and an uncompromising insistence on Divine Unity. It is strange that this patent fact should have escaped

the notice of the Holy Prophet's critics and carpers.

Historical data, too, lend no support whatever to this so-called "lapse." The story has been rejected as completely unreliable by all the learned Commentators of the Qur'ān, Ibn Kathīr and Raḍī among them. The renowned leaders of Muslim religious thought, well versed in the science of *Ḥadīth*, such as 'Ainī, Qādī 'Ayyād and Nawawī, have regarded it as pure invention. No trace of this story is to be found in *الصحاح الستة* (the Six Reliable Collections of *Ḥadīth*). Imām Bukhārī, whose collection, the *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, is regarded by Muslim scholars as the most reliable book next to the Qur'ān and who himself was a contemporary of Wāqidī to whom goes the unenviable credit of forging and reporting this story, makes no mention of it, nor does the great historian, Ibn Ishāq, who was born more than 40 years before him. It may be, as stated by Qaṣṭalānī and Zurqānī and supported by some other eminent scholars, that when the Holy Prophet, during the recital of the present *Sūra* before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, came to these verses, some evil-minded person from among the disbelievers might have loudly interjected the words *تلك الغرائق العلى الخ*, as was the disbelievers' wont to create confusion by resorting to such low tactics, when the Qur'ān was being recited (41 : 27).

It is also on record that in the "Days of Ignorance," the Quraish, when making a circuit of the Ka'ba, used to recite the sentence: *تلك الغرائق العلى وان شفاعتهن لترجي* (Mu'jam al-Buldān, vol. 5, under 'Uzzā).

Besides, it is not possible for Satan to interfere with the purity of the Quranic text. God has taken it upon Himself to protect and safeguard the Qur'ān against all interference and interpolation (15 : 10 & 72 : 27-29). So the whole story

22. 'What ! for you the males and for Him the females'³⁹⁸²

الْكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْاُنْتُ ③

23. That indeed is an unfair division.³⁹⁸³

تِلْكَ اِذَا قِسَمَةٌ ضِيْرَةٌ ③

24. 'These are but names which you have named^b—you and your fathers—for which Allah has sent down no authority.' They follow naught but conjecture and what *their* souls desire, while there has *already* come to them guidance from their Lord.³⁹⁸⁴

اِنْ هِيَ اِلَّا اَسْمَاءُ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا اَنْتُمْ وَاَبَاؤُكُمْ
مَا اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ اِنْ يَتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا
الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوٰى الْاَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّنْ
رَّبِّهِمْ الْهُدٰى ③

a6 : 101 ; 16 : 58 ; 37 : 154 ; 43 : 17 ; 52 : 40. b7 : 72; 12 : 41; 22 : 72.

as invented by Wāqidī and taken undue advantage of by Muir and others of his class is a pure myth and possesses no basis in fact.

It is further stated that the 53rd verse of *Sūra Al-Hajj* was revealed in connection with this incident. The fact that the *Sūra* under comment was revealed in the 5th year of the Call and *Sūra Al-Hajj* in the 13th or 12th year, takes the bottom completely from under this baseless assertion.

3982. Commentary :

The verse administers a further rebuke to the Meccan pagans, purporting to say to them that apart from their blasphemous practice of associating gods, made of wood and stone, with the Almighty God, the Creator of heavens and earth and the Lord of Glory, Majesty and Dignity, they have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth they regard as a

source of disgrace and humiliation in their own case.

3983. Important Words :

ضِيْرٌ (unjust) is derived from ضَاوَزَ which means, he deviated from the right course; he acted unjustly, wrongfully, tyrannically. ضَاوَزَ فِي الْحَكْمِ means, he gave an unjust judgment. ضَاوَزَهُ حَقُّهُ means, he deprived him or defrauded him of a part or the whole of his right or due (Lane & Aqrab).

3984. Commentary :

Whereas a true believer stands on the bed-rock of certainty and sure knowledge (12 : 109), an idolater possesses no rational argument and no revealed authority for his false beliefs or doctrines. He falls a helpless victim to conjecture and superstition and is a slave to his own desires and fancies. The verse, as also v. 29, speaks of the utter untenability of an idolater's position. He stands on a broken reed.

25. Can man have whatever he desires?³⁹⁸⁵

أَمَرِ لِلنَّاسِ مَا تَنَزَّلُ^{٢٥}

26. Nay, to Allah belong the Hereafter and this *world*.

فَلِلَّهِ الْآخِرَةُ وَالْأُولَى^{٢٦}

R. 2 27. And how many an angel is there in the heavens, but their intercession shall be of no avail, except after Allah has given permission to whomsoever He wills and pleases.³⁹⁸⁶

وَكَمْ مِنْ مَلَكٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَ

يَرْضَاهُ^{٢٧}

28. Those who believe not in the Hereafter name the angels with names of females;^b

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةً الْأُنثَى^{٢٨}

29. But they have no knowledge thereof. They follow nothing but conjecture; and conjecture avails naught against truth.^c

وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَ إِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا^{٢٩}

30. So turn aside from him who turns away from Our remembrance, and seeks nothing but the life of this world.

فَاعْرِضْ عَنْ مَنْ تَوَلَّى هَٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا^{٣٠}

31. That is the utmost limit of their knowledge. Verily, thy Lord knows best him who strays from His way, and He knows him best who follows guidance.³⁹⁸⁷

ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدَى^{٣١}

^a2 : 256 ; 20 : 110 ; 34 : 24. ^b4 : 118 ; 37 : 150-151 ; 43 : 20. ^c6 : 117 ; 10 : 37.

^d16 : 126 ; 28 : 57 ; 68 : 8.

3985. Commentary :

The verse means that idolaters hope that their gods will intercede for them with Allah. They are entertaining a false hope which will never be fulfilled.

3986. Commentary :

For a detailed note on شَفَاعَة (intercession) see 2 : 49 and 19 : 88.

The words لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَى may also mean, regarding one who conforms to His will and with

whom He is pleased.

3987. Commentary :

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically or by way of reproach. The utmost limit of the knowledge of disbelievers (the verse purports to say) is that they worship gods, which can do them no good nor can they injure them, in preference to the Almighty God, to Whom belongs whatever is in the

32. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil for what they have wrought, and reward those who do good with what is best.^a

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ
الَّذِيْنَ اَسَاءُوْا بِمَا عَمِلُوْا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَحْسَنُوْا
بِالْحُسْنِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33. Those who shun the grave sins and immoral actions except minor faults^b—verily, thy Lord is Master of vast forgiveness.^c He knows you full well *from the time* when He created you from the earth, and when you were embryos in the bellies of your mothers. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows him best who is *truly* righteous.³⁹⁸⁸

الَّذِيْنَ يَجْتَنِبُوْنَ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الْاِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشِ اِلَّا
الَّذِيْنَ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَّاسِعٌ مِّنْ غَفْرَةٍ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ
اِذَا اَنْشَأَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ وَاِذَا اَنْتُمْ اِحْثٰ فِيْ
بُطُوْنٍ اُمَهْتِكُمْ فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ
بِمَن اَتَّقٰ ﴿٣٣﴾

3 34. Seest thou him who turns away.

اَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِيْ تَوَلٰٓ

35. And gives a little, and does it grudgingly?³⁹⁸⁹

وَاَعْطٰ قَلِيْلًا وَّاَكْدٰٓ

^a4 : 124-125 ; 6 : 161; 41 : 47.

^b4 : 32 ; 42 : 38.

^c13 : 7; 41 : 44.

heavens and the earth and Who has created all things for the service of man. Moreover, all their strivings are confined to the acquirement of material things of this life and they have no thought for the Hereafter.

impression on it. The root-word possesses the sense of temporariness, haste and infrequency and of doing a thing unintentionally. A chance, unintentional look at a woman has also been called *للم* by some authorities (Lane & Aqrab).

3988. Important Words :

للم (minor faults) is derived from *لم*. They say *لم بالقوم* او *على القوم* . i.e., he came to the people and alighted at their abode temporarily as a guest. *المت بكذا* means, I appreciated it without committing it. *لم* also means, he visited covertly or in a light, slight or hasty manner or rarely. *لم* means, a chance leaning towards evil; a temporary and light lapse ; a rare slight offence, a passing evil idea which flashes across the mind and leaves no

3989. Important Words :

أكدى (gives grudgingly) is derived from *كدى*. They say *أكدى الرجل* . i.e., the man gave niggardly or grudgingly; he did not succeed in getting what he wanted. *أكده عن كذا* means, he prevented him from such a thing. *أكدى المعدن* means, the mine refused to bring out diamonds and jewels. *أكدى الحافر* means, the digger in the course of digging came across a hard or stony piece of ground or clod and could dig no further. *فأكدى*

36. Has he the knowledge of the unseen, so that he can see *his own end*?

37. Has he not been informed of what is in the Scriptures of Moses,

38. And of Abraham who fulfilled the commandments?—³⁹⁹⁰

39. That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another^a,³⁹⁹¹

40. And that man will have nothing but what he strives for,³⁹⁹²

41. And that his striving shall soon be seen;³⁹⁹³

42. Then will he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward;

أَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ بِرَأْيِهِ ۝

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبِّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَى ۝

وَأِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى ۝

أَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى ۝

وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى ۝

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى ۝

ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءُ الْأَوْفَى ۝

^a6 : 165; 35 : 19; 39 : 8.

means, he begged of him but found him like a hard piece of ground and he did not give. *أَكْدَى الْمَطَرِ* means, the rain decreased (Aqrab).

3990. Commentary :

Patriarch Abraham, the progenitor of the three great religious peoples—Jews, Christians and Muslims—fulfilled faithfully the covenant he had made with God. He carried out literally all Divine commandments. He was made to pass through severe trials and tribulations and successfully came out of those ordeals. Says the Qur'an: *And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands, which he fulfilled* (2 : 125). Abraham was commanded by God to leave his only son Ishmael, (the hope and prop of his old age), when a mere child, with his elderly mother, in the arid and barren waste, near Mecca, and then, the child having grown up to be a young boy, he was commanded to slaughter him, which command Abraham prepared to carry out, without the

least hesitancy. It were actions like these that earned for him the Divine title of the Faithful, which is the significance of the word *وَفَّى*.

3991. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that every man shall have to carry his own cross and bear his own burden. See also 17 : 14-16.

3992. Commentary :

It is after unremitting, incessant and persistent striving, accompanied by noble ideals and sublime principles, that one can achieve the object of one's quest.

3993. Commentary :

The kind of striving mentioned in the preceding verse never fails to produce the desired results.

43. And that to thy Lord do *all* things ultimately go;³⁹⁹⁴

44. And that it is He Who makes men laugh and makes them weep;

45. And that it is He Who causes death and gives life;^a

46. And that He creates the pairs, male and female,^b

47. ^cFrom a sperm-drop when it is poured forth;

48. And that it is for Him to bring forth the second creation;

49. And that it is He Who enriches and grants wealth to *one's* satisfaction;³⁹⁹⁵

50. And that He is the Lord of Sirius;³⁹⁹⁶

51. And that He destroyed the first tribe of 'Ad,³⁹⁹⁷

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَىٰ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا ۝

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الذَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ۝

مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَىٰ ۝

وَأَنَّ عَلَيْهِ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَغْنَىٰ وَأَقْنَىٰ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ رَبُّ الشَّعَرِ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَىٰ ۝

^a2 : 29 ; 30 : 41.

^b4 : 2 ; 7 : 190 ; 30 : 22.

^c56 : 59-60; 75 : 38.

3994. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the whole system of cause and effect ends with God. He is the Cause of all causes or the First Cause. A natural order of cause and effect pervades the whole universe. Every cause, which is not itself primary, is traceable to some other cause and this to another and so on. But as the series of cause and effect in our finite world cannot be indefinite it must terminate at some point. The Final Cause is, therefore, the Author of the universe. It is to this Final Cause that the present verse calls attention.

3995. Important Words :

أَقْنَىٰ (grants wealth to one's satisfaction) is the transitive form of قَنَى. They say قَنَى المال *i.e.*,

he took for himself property for permanent use and not for possession. أَنَامَ اللهُ means, God gave him wealth and pleased him *i.e.*, it made him contented and satisfied (Lane & Aqrab).

3996. Commentary :

The Arabs worshipped the mighty star, Sirius, because they regarded it as a source of good or bad luck for them.

3997. Commentary :

After putting forward argument in support of Divine Unity from human reason and the insignificant beginning of man, the *Sūra*, from this verse introduces history to prove the same thesis.

52. And the tribe of Thamūd, and He spared not any of them,³⁹⁹⁸

53. And He destroyed the people of Noah before them—verily, they were most unjust and most rebellious—

54. And He overthrew the subverted cities of the people of Lot.

55. So that there covered them that which covered.³⁹⁹⁹

56. Which then, O believer, of the bounties of thy Lord wilt thou dispute?⁴⁰⁰⁰

57. This is a Warner from among the class of the Warners of old.

58. The Hour that was to come has drawn nigh,⁴⁰⁰¹

59. None but Allah can avert it.

60. Do you then wonder at this announcement?⁴⁰⁰²

وَتَمُودًا فَمَا آتَيْنَاهُ^{٥٢}

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا هُمْ أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْغَى^{٥٣}

وَالْمُوتَفِكَ أَهْوَى^{٥٤}

فَغَشَّاهَا مَا غَشَّى^{٥٥}

فَيَايَا آلَاءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَى^{٥٦}

هَذَا نَذِيرٌ مِّنَ التُّذْرِ الْأُولَى^{٥٧}

أَزِفَتِ الْأَازِفَةُ^{٥٨}

لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَاشِفَةٌ^{٥٩}

أَفَيْنَ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ^{٦٠}

3998. Commentary :

The tribe of Thamūd is known as the second 'Ād.

3999. Commentary :

The particle لَ has been used here to denote respect or dignity, meaning that an overwhelming punishment enveloped them.

4000. Commentary :

After seeing so many and so clear and invincible arguments and Signs that support and substantiate the claims of the Holy Prophet, the verse says to the obstinate disbelievers, in words full of pathos, mixed with irony, how long will they continue to deny truth and wander in the wilderness of disbelief?

4001. Important Words :

الْأَزِفَةُ (The Hour) is fem. act. part.

from أَزَفَ which means, he was or became or drew near; he hastened or was quick. الْأَزِفَةُ means, the Hour of Judgment; the Resurrection; the near event; death (Lane).

Commentary :

The idolaters of Mecca, says the verse, have persisted in denying the Divine Message and as a result of their denial the hour of the overthrow of their power has drawn very near; nay it is knocking at their very door.

4002. Commentary :

This S̄ūra was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry i.e., in the fifth year of the Call, when in the midst of mockery, threats and persecution, the fate of Islam was hanging in the balance. It was at that time that the prophecy was made about the overthrow of

61. And do you laugh, and weep not?

وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62. And will you remain proudly heedless?⁴⁰⁰³

وَأَنْتُمْ سِيدُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63. So prostrate yourselves before Allah, and worship Him.⁴⁰⁰⁴

فَاسْجُدْ وَابْتَغِ الْوَسِيلَةَ ﴿٦٣﴾
فَاعْبُدْ اللَّهَ وَاعْبُدُوا ﴿٦٤﴾

^{a7} : 207; 22 : 78; 41 : 38; 96 : 20.

the Quraishite power in this *Sūra*, and in much more forceful accents in the next (54 : 46).

Message and worship God and repent so that mercy might be shown to them.

4003. Important Words :

سَامِدُونَ (proudly heedless) is the plural of سَامِد which is act. part. from سَمَد which means, he was or became high and elevated; he raised his head in pride; he diverted himself, sported and played; he was or became negligent or heedless and went away leaving a thing; he was or became confounded, perplexed, amazed, and was unable to see the right course; he kept constantly to an affair (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The warning contained in vv. 58—61 is repeated here.

4004. Commentary :

The verse seems to say to disbelievers, there is yet time that they should accept the Divine

It seems that as the Holy Prophet finished reciting the *Sūra*, before a mixed gathering of Muslims and disbelievers, and, along with his followers, he prostrated himself on the ground, the disbelievers too, having been deeply impressed with the solemnity of the occasion and being overawed by the august recitation of the Quranic words, as well as by God's Majesty and Glory, might also have fallen in prostration. This was not unlikely since they regarded God as the Supreme Lord and Creator and their own deities as mere intercessors with Him (10 : 19). By connecting this plausible incident, however, with the baseless legend woven round vv. 21—23 by some "inventive minds," the traducers of the Holy Prophet have persuaded themselves to detect in it a "lapse" on his part. But the lapse, if any, is the creation of their own imagination.

CHAPTER 54

SURA AL-QAMAR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūra* takes its title from its opening verse. It definitely is an early Meccan *Sūra*, having been revealed about the same time as the preceding *Sūra*, Al-Najm, which was revealed in the 5th year of the Call. The *Sūra* so closely resembles *Sūra* Al-Najm in style and contents that it seems to supplement the latter's subject-matter. Whereas *Sūra* Al-Najm had ended on a note of warning to disbelievers in the words : أَوَلَمْ يَأْتِ الْآزِفَةَ i.e., the Hour of their doom has drawn near, the present *Sūra* opens with the expression اقتربت الساعة meaning, that the threatened Hour has almost arrived; it is at their very door.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* is the fifth of the group of seven *Sūrās* which begin with *Sūra* Qāf and end with Al-Wāqī'ah. All these *Sūrās* were revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry and deal with the basic doctrines of Islam—Existence and Unity of God, the Resurrection and Revelation. The *Sūrās* adduce laws of nature, human reason, common sense and histories of the past Prophets as arguments to prove these theses. In some of these *Sūrās* special emphasis has been laid on one kind of arguments with a fleeting reference to other kinds and *vice versa*. In the present *Sūra*, however, the Holy Prophet's Divine claim and the Resurrection have been dealt with, with special reference to the histories of the past Prophets, particularly to those of Noah, the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd and Lot's people.

Towards its end the *Sūra* makes pointed reference to the fulfilment of the prophecy about the destruction and overthrow of the power of pagan Arabs about which a warning had been given in the preceding *Sūra* (53 : 58).



1. In the name of Allah, the
Gracious, the Merciful.^{a4005}

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. The Hour has drawn nigh^b, and
the moon is rent asunder.⁴⁰⁰⁶

إِقْرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ ۖ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ②

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b21 : 2.

4005. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

4006. Important Words :

انشق (is rent asunder) is derived from شق. They say شق الشيئ *i.e.*, he split, clave, tore or rent the thing. شق العصا means, he broke the staff *i.e.*, he separated himself from the community. An Arab would say, شق عصا المسلمين *i.e.*, he created disunion and dissension among the Muslims. انشق القمر means, the moon was or became rent asunder; or according to some, the affair became manifest (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

القمر (the moon). قمر الشئ means, the light of the thing became intense. أقمر الليل means, the night became bright with the light of the moon. القمر means, the moon in its third night and after; the moon absolutely. أقمار العلم وشموسه means, the *ulema* or learned men of the people. القمران means, the sun and the moon (Lane & Aqrab).

• Commentary :

Whether or not "splitting of the moon" into two parts, observable by the naked eye, contravened any physical law of nature, it cannot be denied that the event lacks historical evidence which could at all be described as unimpeachable. At the same time no one can presume to have fathomed all Divine mysteries or fully

comprehended or encompassed all the secrets of nature. It is not possible to imagine that such an event, affecting a considerable area of the globe, should have remained unnoticed in the observatories of the world or that it should have remained unrecorded in books of history. But the incident having found a mention in such reliable collections of *Hadith* as Bukhārī and Muslim and having been narrated successively in traditions of reliable authority and reported by such learned Companions of the Holy Prophet as Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās, does show that some natural phenomenon of unusual importance must have taken place in the time of the Holy Prophet. Some Commentators of the Qur'ān—Rāḍī among them—have sought to solve the difficult problem by declaring the incident to be a lunar eclipse. Imām Ghazālī and Shah Walī Allāh also hold the view that the moon had not in fact been rent asunder, but that God had so contrived that it appeared to the beholders as such. However, taking into consideration the forceful language in which it has been mentioned in the Qur'ān, the incident appears to be something more than a mere lunar eclipse. It indeed constituted a great miracle shown by the Prophet at the insistent demand of disbelievers (see Bukhārī & Muslim). It seems to be a vision of the Holy Prophet in which the Companions of the Holy Prophet and some of the Quraish were made to share—just as the rod turning into a serpent was a vision of Moses in which the

3. "And if they see a Sign, they turn away and say, 'a continuous sorcery.'⁴⁰⁰⁷

وَأِنْ يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ
مُسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢١﴾

^a21 : 2.

magicians were made to share. Or it may be that just as the striking of sea-water by Moses with his rod coincided with the ebb of the tide and thus assumed the character of a miracle, because God alone knew when the sea would recede and it was He Who commanded Moses to strike the waters at the time of recession, similarly God may have commanded the Holy Prophet to show the miracle of the cleaving asunder of the moon at a time when a heavenly body was to take such a position in front of the moon that it caused the moon to appear to the beholders as split into two parts.

But most plausible explanation, which is also possessed of very deep spiritual significance of this, one of the most outstanding miracles shown by the Holy Prophet, lies in the fact that the moon was the national emblem of the Arabs and the symbol of their political power, just as the sun at that time was the national ensign of the Persians. When Şafiyya, the daughter of Huyay bin Akhtab, a leader of the Jews of Khaibar, mentioned to her father that she had seen in a dream that the moon had fallen into her lap, he slapped her face saying that she wanted to marry the leader of the Arabs. After the fall of Khaibar Şafiyya's dream was fulfilled when she was married to the Holy Prophet (Zurqānī & Usud al-Ghābbah). Similarly, 'Ā'isha had seen a dream that three moons had fallen in her private apartment which saw its fulfilment when the Holy Prophet, Abū Bakr and 'Umar were buried there one after the other (Mu'attā', *kitāb al-Janā'iz*). According to this sense of the word قمر, the verse would signify that the hour of destruction of their political power with which the disbelieving Arabs had

been threatened in 53 : 58 has already arrived. The word الساعة (Hour) in that case would refer to the Battle of Badr in which all the chiefs and leaders of the Quraish were killed and the foundations of the complete destruction of their power were laid. Thus the verse constituted a mighty prophecy which met with remarkable fulfilment, nearly eight or nine years after its announcement. Moreover, the Holy Prophet has been called "illuminating moon" (قمرًا منيرًا) in the Qur'ān. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that after the Holy Prophet's separation from the Quraish, the "Hour" of the destruction of their power would arrive, and it happened likewise. About a year after the emigration of the Holy Prophet to Medina, the Battle of Badr was fought which broke the Quraishite power.

Taking the expression انشق القمر in the sense, "the affair has become manifest," the verse would mean that the hour of the destruction of the Quraishite power has arrived and that now it would become manifest that the Prophet was a true Divine Messenger.

The word الساعة, besides the Battle of Badr, may apply to the Battle of the Ditch and the fall of Mecca, as these three events combined to bring about complete and total annihilation of the power of pagan Arabs.

4007. Important Words :

مستمر (continuous) is derived from استمر which means, he or it passed; went away; it (a thing) went on in one uniform course or manner; it continued in the same state; he or it became strong or firm like a rope tightly twisted. مستمر بالشيء means, he became strong to bear th

4. They reject *the truth* and follow their own fancies. But every decree of God shall certainly come to pass.⁴⁰⁰⁸

5. And there has already come to them the great news wherein is a warning—⁴⁰⁰⁹

6. Consummate wisdom; but the "warning profit *them* not."⁴⁰¹⁰

7. Therefore, turn thou away from them. The day when the Summoner will summon *them* to a disagreeable thing.⁴⁰¹¹

وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُسْتَقَرٌّ ﴿٥﴾

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٦﴾

حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ التُّذُرُ ﴿٧﴾

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَى شَيْءٍ تُكْرَهُ ﴿٨﴾

102 : 410

thing. مستمر means, (1) passing, fleeting, transient; (2) continuous; (3) strong, firm (Lane & Aqrab).

4008. **Commentary :**

The verse means that the destruction of the power of the pagan Quraish and the triumph of Islam has been decreed by God and the Divine decree must come to pass.

4009. **Important Words :**

ازدجر (warning) is derived from ازدجر which means, he chid, repelled, drove, spurned, checked him. They say ازدجره عن كذا i.e., he prevented or hindered him from doing so by cry or harsh speech. مزدجر means, prevention, prohibition; threatening; something by which one is prevented, forbidden from doing a certain thing — a warning (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the pagan Arabs must have learnt from the accounts of

disbelievers of the Prophets of yore that rejection of Truth does not pay. They should have taken a lesson from their evil end and should have abstained from following in their footsteps.

4010. **Important Words :**

النذر (warning) is inf. noun from أنذر and means, a warning. It is also the plural of نذير i.e., a Warner. They say أنذره بالامر i.e., he informed him or advised him of the affair; he warned him of it or put him on guard or in fear against it (Aqrab & Lane).

4011. **Important Words :**

نكر (disagreeable) is derived from نكر (nakira) which means, it (a thing or affair) was or became bad, evil, abominable or foul; it was or became disallowed, disagreeable; it was or became difficult, hard, arduous or severe (Lane).

8. "While their eyes will be cast down and they will come forth from *their* graves as though they were locusts scattered about,"⁴⁰¹²

خُشَعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ
جَرَادٌ مُنْتَشِرٌ ۝

9. 'Hastening towards the Summoner. The disbelievers will say, 'This is a hard day.'⁴⁰¹³

مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا
يَوْمٌ عَسِرٌ ۝

10. The people of Noah rejected *the truth* before them^e; aye, they rejected Our Servant and said,^a 'A madman and one who is spurned.'⁴⁰¹⁴

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا
مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ ۝

11. He prayed to his Lord saying, 'I am overcome, so *come* Thou to my help!'

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرَ ۝

^a70 : 45. ^b36 : 52 ; 14 : 44. ^c6 : 35 ; 22 : 43; 35 : 26; 40 : 6. ^d23 : 26. ^e23 : 27 ; 26 : 118-118.

Commentary :

See v. 9.

4012. Commentary :

'Graves' here means the houses of disbelievers. At several places in the Qur'an disbelievers have been likened to the dead because of their being completely devoid of spiritual life (27 : 81; 35 : 23).

4013. Important Words :

مهطعين (hastening) is the plural of هطع which is act. part. from أھطع which is transitive form of هطع. They say هطع الرجل i.e., the man came running in fright; or the man advanced with his eyes fixed on something from which he did not raise them. هطع في السیر means, he hastened and came in haste frightened. أھطع الرجل also means, the man looked with humility. مهطع means, one who looks at a thing without raising his eyes from it (Aqrab). See also 14 : 44.

Commentary :

This and the preceding two verses give a graphic picture of the confusion, consternation and bewilderment of the Quraish when they saw the Summoner—the Holy Prophet—whom they had driven out of Mecca and upon whose head they had set a price only a few years earlier, at the very gates of the city. The mighty prophecy embodied in these verses was made at a time when the fate of Islam itself was hanging in the balance and, humanly speaking, there was not the remotest possibility of its being fulfilled.

4014. Commentary :

As briefly stated in the Introduction, almost the entire *Sūra* is devoted to a discussion of the dreadful fate which the rejectors of former Divine Prophets had met and this fact has been adduced as an argument to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim. The cases of the People of Noah, of the tribes of 'Ad and Thamūd and

12. Thereupon We opened the gates of heaven, with water pouring down;⁴⁰¹⁵

13. ^aAnd We caused the earth to burst forth with springs, so the two waters met for a purpose that was decreed.⁴⁰¹⁶

14. ^bAnd We carried him upon that which was made of planks and nails.⁴⁰¹⁷

15. It floated on under Our eyes^c; a reward for him who had been rejected.

16. ^dAnd We left it as a Sign for the succeeding generations; but is there anyone who would take heed?⁴⁰¹⁸

فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَرٍ ۝
وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ
قَدْ قُدِرَ ۝

وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسُرٍ ۝

تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَاءً لِمَنْ كَانَ كُفِرَ ۝

وَلَقَدْ تَرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ۝

^a11 : 41; 21 : 78; 26 : 121; 37 : 83; 71 : 26.

^b26 : 120; 29 : 16.

^c11 : 42-43.

^d29 : 16.

that of the people of Lot have received a special and somewhat detailed mention because these peoples lived on the confines of the Hijāz and the Quraish were quite familiar with their histories and had commercial relations with them. The people to whom Noah preached his Message lived in Iraq which lies to the north-east of Arabia, and the tribe of 'Ād lived in Yemen and Ḥaḍarmaut which form the southern part of it while the tribe of Thamūd thrived and flourished in the north-west of Arabia which extends from the Hijāz to Palestine and the ill-fated people of Lot lived in Sodom and Gom-morah in Palestine.

4015. Important Words :

منهر (pouring down) is derived from همر. They say همر الماء i.e., he poured out the water. همر العين بالدمع means, the eyes flowed with tears. انهمر الماء means, the water poured out and flowed (Aqrab).

4016. Commentary :

The rain water pouring down in torrents

from the skies and also gushing forth from under the ground, caused a huge flood which engulfed the entire land and thus the Divine decree was fulfilled, destroying the people of Noah.

4017. Important Words :

دسر (nails) is the plural of دسار which is derived from دسر which means, he drove a nail with force; he nailed anything; he fastened or repaired a ship with a nail, or with cord of fibres of palm-tree. They say دسره i.e., he thrust, drove, pierced or stabbed him vehemently with a spear, he or it pushed, drove, propelled him or it. دسار means, a cord of fibres of the palm tree with which the planks of a ship are bound together; a nail of a ship (Lane & Aqrab).

4018. Important Words :

مدكر (who would take heed) is act. part. from ادكر (iddakara) which is synonymous with تذكر (tadhakkara) and اذكر (idhdhakara) meaning, he remembered or

17. How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِي ①٤

18. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy^a to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?⁴⁰¹⁹

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ①٥

19. *The tribe of 'Ad rejected^b the Truth.* How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِي ①٦

20. ^cWe sent against them a furious wind on a day of unending ill luck.⁴⁰²⁰

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمٍ نَحْسٍ مُسْتَمِرٍّ ①٧

21. Tearing people away as though they were the trunks of uprooted palm trees^d.⁴⁰²¹

تَنْزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُنْقَعِرٍ ①٨

^a19 : 98; 44 : 59.

^b26 : 124.

^c41 : 17; 69 : 7.

^d69 : 8.

became reminded of; he took heed, reflected or was mindful. مدكر means, one who would take heed, reflect and be mindful (Lane & Aqrab).

with the Divine Being and have been purified by Him.

Moreover, the Qur'an has been made easy in this sense also that it comprehends all those permanent and imperishable teachings that are found in other revealed Scriptures, with a great deal more that is indispensable for the guidance of man till the end of time (98 : 4).

4019. Commentary :

All those basic ideals, principles and rules of conduct which concern man's moral development and his physical and social progress and well-being, have been laid down in the Qur'an in simple and easy language and are easily comprehensible by persons of average intelligence and understanding and are also quite practical and practicable because they are in harmony with human nature. But the treasures of Divine realization and deep mysteries of the unknown which lie hidden in the Qur'an are accessible only to those few holy men of God who are endowed with special spiritual insight and who have scaled the dizzy heights of communion

4020. Commentary :

The verse does not mean that any particular time is auspicious or inauspicious or lucky or unlucky. The meaning is that for the tribe of 'Ad the day proved unlucky.

4021. Important Words :

منقعر (uprooted) is derived from قعر. They say قعر الشجرة means, he uprooted the tree. انقعر الشجرة means, the tree became uprooted. منقعر means, uprooted (Lane & Aqrab)

22. How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

23. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to *understand* and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

2 24. The tribe of Thamūd also rejected the Warners^a.⁴⁰²²

25. And they said, 'What! a man, from among ourselves a single mortal! Shall we follow him? Then indeed we would be in manifest error, and *would be* mad.⁴⁰²³

26. ^bHas the Reminder been revealed to him *alone* of all of us? Nay, he is a boastful liar.⁴⁰²⁴

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِي ۝٢٢

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْكِرٍ ۝٢٣

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ ۝٢٤

فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِثَّنَا وَاحِدًا نَتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذَا تَفَيَّ

ضَلَّلٍ وَسُعُرٍ ۝٢٥

ءَأُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ

أَشْرٌ ۝٢٦

^a69 : 5.

^b38 : 9.

4022. Commentary :

As all Prophets are commissioned by God and their revelation proceeds from the same Divine Source and contains analogous eternal basic principles, the rejection of one Prophet amounts to the rejection of all of them. That is why the verse describes the tribe of Thamūd as having rejected all Divine Messengers while, in fact, they had rejected only the Prophet Ṣāliḥ.

4023. Important Words :

سعر (madness) is derived from سعر (sa'ara). They say سعر الحرب *i.e.*, he provoked the war. سعر الرجل (su'ira) means, the man was smitten by hot wind; he was or became vehemently hungry or thirsty; he was or became mad. سعر means, madness, insanity, demoniacal posses-

sion; punishment; vehemence of heat, hunger or thirst; fury; pain (Lane & Aqrab).

4024. Important Words :

أشر (boastful) is act. part. from أشر (ashira) which means, he exulted and behaved insolently; he behaved with pride and self-conceitedness. أشر means, one who is insolent and behaves with pride and exults (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Conceit, false pride and arrogance are man's greatest spiritual enemies. They constitute the hard hurdles that bar the way to the acceptance of truth. The Qur'an has repeatedly mentioned disbelievers as having rejected the Divine Message due to these moral ills. See 25 : 8; 38 : 9; 43 : 32.

27. 'Tomorrow will they know who is the boastful liar.'

28. "We will send the she-camel as a trial for them. So watch them. O *Ṣāliḥ*, and have patience.'⁴⁰²⁵

29. 'And tell them that the water is shared *only* between them, *but as for the she-camel* every drinking time may be attended *by her*.'⁴⁰²⁶

30. But they called their comrade, and he seized *a sword* and hamstrung *her*^b.⁴⁰²⁷

31. How *terrible* then was My punishment and My warning!

32. "We sent against them a single blast, and they became like the dry stubble, whittled down by a maker of enclosure."⁴⁰²⁸

سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مِّنَ الْكَذَّابِ الْأَشْرُ ٢٧

إِنَّا مُرْسِلُوا النَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَأَمَّا تَبِقُهُمْ

وَاصْطَبِرْ ٢٨

وَبَيِّنْ لَهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ شَرْبٍ

مُّحْتَضَرٌ ٢٩

فَنَادَوْا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ ٣٠

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ٣١

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيِّحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَكَانُوا

كَهَشِيمٍ الْمُحْتَظِرِ ٣٢

^a7 : 74; 11 : 65; 17 : 60; 26 : 156; 91 : 14.

^b7 : 78; 11 : 66; 26 : 158; 91 : 15.

^c7 : 79; 11 : 68; 26 : 159; 41 : 18.

4025. Important Words :

اصطبر means, he was patient or constant; he acquired patience; he was tried with patience. It is the intensive form of صبر (Lane & Aqrab).

4026. Important Words :

شرب (drinking) is inf. noun from شرب (shariba) and means, water that one drinks; a draught of water; a share or portion of water that falls to one's lot; the right to use water for watering fields and beasts; a watering place; a turn or time of drinking. شرب (shurbun) means, the act of drinking (Lane & Aqrab).

4027. Important Words :

عطا (seized) is derived from عطا. عطا اليه يده means, he raised his hand towards

it. تعاطى الشيء means, he took the thing. تعاطى الامر means, he ventured upon the affair. تعاطى الرجل means, the man stood upon the extremities of the toes and raised his hands to take a thing. عطا (inf. noun) signifies, the act of raising the head and hands to take a thing. تعاط (ta'ātin) is the act of taking a thing with the hand; taking with the hand what is not right or just or due; contending in taking; standing upon the extremities of the toes with raising the hands to a thing; being bold or courageous so as to venture upon a thing without consideration or hesitation (Lane & Aqrab).

4028. Important Words :

المحتظر (maker of enclosure) is act. part. from حظر which is derived from حظر which

33. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

34. "Lot's people also rejected the Warners.

35. ^bWe sent a storm of stones upon them except the family of Lot, whom We delivered by early dawn,

36. As a favour from Us. Thus do We reward him who is grateful.

37. And he indeed had warned them of Our punishment, but they doubted the warning.

38. ^cAnd they *deceitfully* sought to turn him away from his guests. So We blinded their eyes, and said, 'Taste ye now My punishment and My warning.'⁴⁰²⁹

39. ^dAnd there came upon them early in the morning a lasting punishment.⁴⁰³⁰

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْرِكٍ ۝٣٣

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ بِالَّذِينَ ۝٣٤

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّا آلَ لُوطٍ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ ۝٣٥

بِسَحَرٍ ۝٣٥

نِعْمَةٌ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي مَنْ شَكَرَ ۝٣٦

وَلَقَدْ أَنْذَرَهُمْ بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِالَّذِينَ ۝٣٧

وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدُوهُ عَنْ ضَيْغِهِ فَطَسَّأْنَا أَعْيُنَهُمْ ۝٣٨

فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ۝٣٩

وَلَقَدْ صَبَحَهُمْ بُكْرَةً عَذَابٌ مُسْتَقَرٌّ ۝٤٠

^a7 : 83; 26 : 161; 29 : 30.

^b25 : 41; 26 : 174.

^c11 : 79; 15 : 69.

^d11 : 82.

means, he forbade, he prohibited. احتظر means he took for himself an enclosure. احتظر به means, he took it for protection محظر means, a maker of enclosure. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse signifies either that the disbelievers were completely crushed or that they were as worthless in the sight of God as whittled down and crushed stubble, collected by a maker of hedges.

4029. Important Words :

طمس (We blinded their eyes). طمس means, it quitted its form or shape. طمس الرجل means, the man went to a distance or became

distant. طمسه means, he obliterated the mark or trace thereof. طمس الغيم النجوم means, the clouds concealed the stars. See also 10 : 89.

Commentary :

Lot's people sought to take hold of his guests but it seems the latter went into hiding and thus they could not be found out. Or that God so arranged that attention of Lot's people became diverted from them.

4030. Important Words :

صباحهم (came upon them early in the morning). صبح (ṣabbaha) is the intensive form of صبح (ṣabaha). They say صبح القوم i.e., he

40. 'Now taste ye My punishment and My warning.'

41. And, indeed, We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?⁴⁰³¹

R. 3 42. "And surely to the people of Pharaoh also came Warners.

43. They rejected all Our Signs^b. So We seized them with the seizing of the Mighty, the Powerful.⁴⁰³²

44. Are your disbelievers better than those? Or have you an immunity in the Scriptures?^{c4033}

45. Do they say, 'We are a victorious host?'

46. ^aThe hosts shall soon be routed and will turn their backs in flight.⁴⁰³⁴

فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِي وَنَذِيرِ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَ آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ النَّذِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾

كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

أَلْغَارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أُولَئِكَ أَمْ لَكُمْ بَرَاءَةٌ فِي

الزُّبُرِ ﴿٣٤﴾

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُنْتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٣٦﴾

^a20 : 48; 26 : 17.

^b20 : 57.

^c2 : 81.

^d3 : 13; 8 : 37; 38 : 12.

came to the people or attacked them in the morning (Lane & Aqrab). See also 7 : 79.

4031. Commentary :

The account of each of the four peoples of antiquity with whose history the pagan Quraish were quite conversant—the peoples of Noah and Lot and the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd—ends with a stern warning, coupled with a pathetic appeal to them to learn a lesson from the fate of these peoples and not to reject the Message of the Qur'an which is revealed only for their good and rejection of which would land them into ruin.

4032. Commentary :

The use in the verse of the word مقتدر (The Powerful) is very significant. Pharaoh was a

very powerful monarch. He regarded himself as "the most high Lord of the Israelites" (79 : 25). So the might of the real Omnipotent Lord of Moses and Aaron was pitted against that self-designated lord, and he was completely annihilated.

4033. Commentary :

The verse repeats a warning to the pagan Quraish in another form. "Are you in any way better," it asks them, "than those who rejected Noah, Hūd, Lot or Moses. Or have you received a Divine promise recorded in the Divine Scriptures that you will not be punished for your rejection of the Holy Prophet"?

4034. Commentary :

The emphatic prophecy embodied in the verse is definitely about the crushing defeat which the

47. Aye, the Hour is their appointed time; and the Hour will be most calamitous and most bitter.⁴⁰³⁵

48. Surely, the guilty are in *manifest* error and gone mad.⁴⁰³⁶

49. On the day when they will be dragged into the Fire on their faces, and it will be said to them 'Taste ye the touch of Hell.'⁴⁰³⁷

بَلِ السَّاعَةِ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَذَى وَأَمْرٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

إِنَّ الْجَرِيمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٩﴾

Meccan army suffered at the hands of Muslims in the Battle of Badr. The odds were so heavy against the Muslims that when fighting began the Holy Prophet prayed to God in utmost humility and extreme agony, in a tent set up for him for this purpose, in the words: "O Lord, I humbly beseech Thee to fulfil Thy covenant and Thy promise. If this small band of Muslims were destroyed, Thou wilt never be worshipped again on this earth" (Bukhārī & Muslim). After having finished the prayer, the Holy Prophet came out of the tent and facing the field of battle recited the verse *سيهزم الجمع ويولون الدبر* i.e., the hosts shall soon be routed and shall turn their backs in flight.

4035. Important Words :

أدهى (most calamitous) is derived from *دهى*. They say *ما دهاك* i.e., what has befallen thee. The Arabs say *دهته داهية* i.e., a calamity befell him. *أدهى* means, more or most calamitous (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The defeat at Badr was indeed a most formidable and calamitous misfortune for the Quraish. Their power and prestige sustained a crushing blow. Most of their leaders and prominent chiefs were killed. Having suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of a handful of inexperienced and ill-equipped Muslims, they felt deeply humiliated and mortified. The prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter.

The *الساعة* (Hour) mentioned in this and the opening verse of the *Sūra* refers to the Battle of Badr.

4036. Commentary :

The disbelievers are described in v. 25 above, as in the habit of saying in contempt and mockery that it would be madness on their part to give allegiance to or follow an ordinary man from among themselves. In the verse under comment tables are turned upon them, and they are told that rejection and not acceptance of a Divine Messenger is folly and madness.

4037. Important Words :

يسحبون (dragged) is derived from *سحب*. They say *سحبه* i.e., he dragged or drew it along upon the ground. *سحب الريح التراب* means, the wind drew along the dust upon the ground. One would say *جاء يسحب ذيله* i.e., he came dragging along his skirt on the ground, i.e., walking haughtily (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

How remarkably and to the very letter the prophecy made in this verse was fulfilled! It is reported that of the Quraishite leaders and chiefs who were killed in the Battle of Badr, 24 were thrown in a pit for burial, and before he left the field of battle, the Holy Prophet went to the pit, and calling each of them by name, addressed them in the words : *هل وجدتم ما وعدكم ربكم حقا*

50. Verily, We have created everything in *due* measure^a. 4038

51. And Our command is *carried out* by only one word, like the twinkling of an eye. 4039^b

52. And indeed We have destroyed people *before you who were* like unto you. But is there anyone who would take heed?

53. ^cAnd everything they have done is *recorded* in the Books. 4040

54. And every matter, small and great, is written down.

55. Verily, the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and streams. 4041

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ۝٥٠

وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ ۝٥١

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاءَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْكِرٍ ۝٥٢

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ ۝٥٣

وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُسْتَطَرٌ ۝٥٤

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ۝٥٥

^a15 : 22; 25 : 3; 80 : 20.

^b7: 188; 16: 78.

^c18 : 50; 45 : 30.

i.e., Have you found true what your Lord promised you; I have, indeed, found true what my Lord promised me (Bukhārī, *kitāb al-Maghāzī*). He further said : يا أهل القليب بشئ عشيرة النبي كنتم لنبيكم، كذبتُموني وصدقني الناس و أخرجتموني و آواني الناس و قاتلتُموني و صدقني الناس و نصرني الناس *i.e.*, “O fellows of the pit! you proved to be bad relatives of your Prophet. You declared me to be a liar but other people testified to my truth. You expelled me, but other people gave me asylum. You fought against me and other people helped me” (Ṭabari).

4038. **Commentary :**

The verse purports to say that there is a determined measure for everything. It has an appointed time and place. It is when the cup of iniquities of disbelievers becomes full, that they are seized with Divine punishment. God alone knows when and how to punish the wicked people. For the pagan Quraish the Day of Badr was the appointed hour of punishment.

4039. **Commentary :**

The defeat of the Meccans at the battle-field of

Badr came like a bolt from the blue, so sudden and swift it was and so complete and destructive. The glory of Kedar departed, as if in the twinkling of an eye.

4040. **Commentary :**

The verse purports to say that the former Scriptures contain a record of the treatment the disbelievers meted out to God's Prophets and their followers and also of the sad end to which they came on account of their rejection of the Divine Message and their iniquities and evil deeds.

The verse may also signify that the smallest action of man, good or bad, produces its inevitable result, according to the law of cause and effect, and, its indelible impress is preserved in the atmosphere.

4041. **Important Words :**

نهر besides the meaning given in the text, also means, amplitude; light (Aqrab).

56. In the seat of truth with an Omnipotent King.⁴⁰⁴²

مَقْعَدٌ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ٥٦

Commentary :

After dealing with the punishment that overtakes disbelievers on account of their rejection of the Divine Message and their evil deeds, the verse refers to the Divine favours and blessings

that are bestowed upon the righteous, in this and the next world.

4042. Important Words :

مَلِك (King) is the intensive form of مالِك which means, master.

CHAPTER 55

SŪRA AL-RAHMĀN

(Revealed before Hijra)

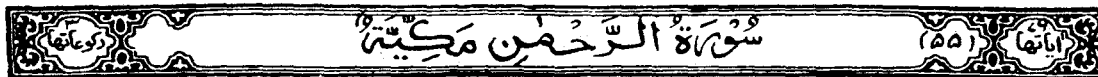
Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

Being the 6th of the special group of the *Sūrās* which begin with *Sūra Qāf* and end with *Al-Wāqiah*, and which were revealed, more or less at the same time at Mecca, in the early years of the Call, the *Sūra* has close resemblance with other members of the group in subject-matter, and deals, like them, with the basic principles of Islam—Divine attributes, particularly God's Unity, and with Resurrection, and Revelation. The *Sūra* bears such close resemblance with the five previous *Sūrās*, particularly with the immediately preceding one—*Sūra Al-Qamar*—that it seems to complement and complete its subject-matter. In *Sūra Al-Qamar* instances were given of the peoples of some Prophets of antiquity with whom the Arabs were quite familiar and who were punished for rejecting the Divine Message, and then the pagan Quraish were asked, would they not benefit from their fate and accept the Quranic Message which was quite easy to understand and to follow. The present *Sūra* gives the reasons why the Qur'ān was revealed.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the Divine attribute—*Al-Rahmān*, signifying that after having created the universe, God created man, the apex and crown of all creation, and that the creation of man was the result of God's beneficence. After man's creation, God revealed Himself to him through His Prophets and Messengers, because he was unable to attain the sublime object of his creation and to fulfil his high destiny without being guided to his great goal by Divine revelation. Prophethood found its most complete and perfect manifestation in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad to whom God gave the Qur'ān, the last and final code of Divine Laws for the guidance of the whole of humanity for all time. But God's gifts to man did not end with his creation. The Beneficent God made the whole universe subservient to him. The heavens with all the celestial bodies, and the earth with all its treasures, the deep seas and high mountains were all created for his sake. Over and above that, God endowed man with great intellectual and discretionary powers so that by sifting right from wrong he might follow Divine guidance and thus attain the object of his creation. But man seems to be so constituted that instead of benefiting from the endless vistas of spiritual progress and development opened up to him by the Gracious, Beneficent and Merciful Providence, he, in his conceit and arrogance seeks to ignore and defy Divine Laws, and consequently brings down upon himself God's punishment. The disobedience and defiance of Divine Laws, the *Sūra* hints, will assume a most heinous form in time to come, which seems to be the present time, and man will be visited with such destructive and annihilating punishment as he had not known before. But just as Heavenly

punishment which will be meted out to the guilty and the iniquitous will be most grievous and frightful, so would the Divine favours that will be bestowed upon the righteous and the God-fearing in that age of Mammon-worship and of hankering after pleasures of the flesh, be beyond measure or count, and thus both Divine punishment and favours would show that God is "Swift at reckoning and the Master of Glory and Honour." The *Sūra* seems to deal particularly with the time when the power and prestige of Western nations will be at their highest, and they will add to their wealth and glory by making extensive use of the great highways of the oceans and by harnessing the forces of nature.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."⁴⁰⁴³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ١

2. The Gracious God

الرَّحْمَنُ ٢

3. He taught the Qur'an.⁴⁰⁴⁴

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ٣

4. He created man.^{b4045}

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ٤

5. He taught him plain speech.⁴⁰⁴⁶

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ٥

6. The sun and the moon *run their courses* according to a fixed reckoning.^{c4047}

الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ٦

7. And the stemless plants and the trees humbly submit to His will.^{d4048}

وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ٧

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b96 : 3. ^c6 : 97 ; 10 : 6 ; 36 : 39-40. ^d13 : 16 ; 16 : 49 ; 22 : 19.

4043. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

that he may rise to the highest peaks of spiritual development and may reflect in his person Divine attributes.

4044. Commentary :

God revealed Himself through His Prophets and Messengers to whom He gave His Word. The Qur'an constituted the culmination of Divine revelation. This revelation of God to man through His Word was not due to any good act on man's part. It was a sheer gift flowing from God's beneficence.

4046. Commentary :

Man's creation and his power to express himself was also due to God's beneficence.

4047. Commentary :

See next verse.

4045. Commentary :

The word الانسان (man), besides its general connotation, may also signify here "the perfect man," i.e., the Holy Prophet, in whom Divine attributes found their most perfect and complete manifestation. The verse thus signifies that out of beneficence God created man in order

4048. Commentary :

The verse, read along with the preceding one, shows that from the largest celestial body to the smallest stemless plant, all things are subject to certain laws and they perform regularly, punctually, and unerringly their allotted tasks. In the huge solar system, which is but one of millions of such systems, every orb proceeds safely on its destined course and never deviates from it.

8. And the heaven He has raised high and set up the measure^{a, 4049}

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ۝٨

9. That you may not transgress the measure.⁴⁰⁵⁰

أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ۝٩

10. So weigh *all things* with justice and fall not short of the measure^{b, 4051}

وَأَقِمْوَا الْوِزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ ۝١٠

11. And He has set the earth for *His* creatures;⁴⁰⁵²

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ ۝١١

^a42 : 18 ; 57 : 26.

^b11 : 85-86 ; 17 : 36 ; 26 : 182 ; 83 : 2—4.

A little disturbance in or deviation from their set course would bring down in pieces the whole universe which has been created for the service of man. It is inconceivable, therefore, that man for whose service this vast and complicated but perfectly regulated universe has been brought into being should have been created without a purpose. The life of man surely has a grand Divine aim to which repeated reference has been made in the Qur'ān.

things is in the least disturbed, the whole universe would fall to pieces. But God has kept all the laws that regulate the world under His exclusive control, beyond the reach of man.

4050. Commentary :

See next verse.

4051. Commentary :

As there is an all-comprehensive harmony in the whole universe, so is man—the crown and object of creation—enjoined to maintain a just balance and to treat with equity and justice his fellow beings, giving, every one his due, and to avoid extremes, and follow the golden mean in the discharge of his duties towards his Creator. This is the significance of the expressions, “you may not transgress the measure” and “fall not short of measure.”

4049. Important Words :

الميزان (measure) is derived from وزن . They say وزن الشيء *i.e.*, he raised the thing in order to know its weight or measure. وزن الرجل (wazuna), means, the man was or became of sound and weighty opinion. وزن means, weight; measure; توازن means to be equal to one another in weight, measure or value; equilibrium; الميزان means, balance; measure; counter-part; justice. They say, استقام ميزان النهار, *i.e.*, it was mid-day (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The whole universe is subject to a uniform law and all its constituent parts unite to form a glorious harmony of structure and motion. If this harmony or equilibrium between different

4052. Important Words :

الانام (creatures) means, mankind or the *jinn* or all the creatures that are on the surface of the earth; everything having a soul (Lane & Aqrab).

12. Therein are *all kinds of* fruit^a
and palm-trees with sheaths,⁴⁰⁵³

فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ مَّوْءُ النَّخْلِ ذَاتُ الْكُثَامِ ۝١٢

13. And grain with *its* husk and
fragrant plants.⁴⁰⁵⁴

وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ۝١٣

14. Which, then, of the favours of
your Lord will you twain deny, *O men*
and *Jinn*?⁴⁰⁵⁵

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ۝١٤

^a50 : 10-11.

4053. Commentary :

See next verse.

4054. Important Words :

العصف (husk) is inf. noun from عصف (a:afa). They say عصف الريح i.e., the wind blew violently or vehemently. The Arabs say عصف بهم الدهر i.e., the time destroyed them. عصف الزرع means, he cut the corn before it attained maturity. عصف means, the herb of corn or the seed-produce; the husk; straw; the stalk or stem of corn (Lane & Aqrab).

الريحان (fragrant plants) is derived from راح and means, any sweet-smelling plant; its extremities when the first of its blossoms come forth upon it or its leaves; offspring; a bounty or gift of God; sustenance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

This and the preceding two verses briefly point to all those natural things which are so essential for the physical development of man, عصف being the fodder for animals which form an indispensable part of his life. The verses purport to say that when, out of His unbounded grace and beneficence, God has created all the things that are necessary for man's physical life, it is inconceivable that He should have omitted to provide the things which are so essential for

his spiritual growth, which is the very aim and object of his life. For that purpose God sent His Messengers and Prophets and through them He revealed Himself. The words العصف (husk) and الريحان (fragrance) may point respectively to the physical and spiritual needs and requirements of man.

4055. Important Words :

آلاء (favours) is the plural of إلو (ilwun) or ألو (alwun) and إلى (ilyun) or ألى (alyun), etc., which all mean, benefit, benefaction, favour, boon or blessing; might or power; attribute or good quality. An Arab poet says :

هم الملوك و أبناء الملوك لهم
فضل على الناس فى الآلاء و النعم

i.e., they are kings and the sons of kings; they possess superiority over people on account of their might (or attributes) and gifts (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The dual form in تَكْذِبَانِ may have been used for the two classes of *jinn* and men referred to in v. 34 below, or it may signify two classes of men only, viz., believers and disbelievers, leaders and their followers, the rich and the poor, or the white or coloured races. Or

15. He created man from dry ringing clay *which is like baked pottery*^{a6}.⁴⁰⁵⁶

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ۝

^{a6} 3; 15 : 27, 29.

it may have been used to impart emphasis to denote the dignity of the commandment embodied in the sentence. Such dual form is generally used in the Arabic language. See also 50 : 25.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that when the verse رَبِّكَمَا تَكْذِبَانِ is recited the believers present should respond by the expression: اللَّهُمَّ وَلَا يَشِيئُ مِنْ آلَاكَ تَكْذِبُ فَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ i.e., "none of Thy favours, Our Lord, do we deny and for Thee is all praise." (Ibn Kathīr)

4056. Important Words :

صَلْصَال (ringing clay) is derived from صَلَلَ which means, it sounded or made a clashing, ringing, tinkling or repeated sound. صَلْصَال means, clay not made into pottery, so called because of its making a sound; or clay mixed with sand which, when it becomes dry, makes a sound and when baked is فَخَّار, or dry clay that makes a sound by reason of its dryness (Lane & Aqrab). See also 15 : 29.

فَخَّر (baked pottery) is derived from فَخَرَ i.e., he boasted or recounted his glorious deeds or qualities, or he arrogated to himself greatness and nobility; he magnified himself by boasting. فَخْر (fakhira) means, he disdained or scorned. فَخَّار means, baked pottery or baked vessels of clay, applied specially to empty vessels (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

After having mentioned the creation of the

celestial firmament and of the placing in it of the sun and the moon and of their regular and perpetual movements, followed by a mention of the spreading of the earth and of all the vegetables that grow on it, the *Sūra*, in the present verse, proceeds to refer to the coming into existence of man, the climax of all creation.

The creation of man from dry, ringing clay (صَلْصَال) may signify that he has been created from matter in which the faculty and attribute of speech lay latent. As صَلْصَال emits a sound only when struck with something extraneous, its use here is intended to hint that man's power to respond is subject to his being able to receive the Divine Call.

Three words have been used in the Qur'an to express the different stages of the creation, and of the spiritual development of man. The first stage is expressed by the words خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تَرَابٍ i.e., God created him out of dust (3 : 60). The second stage is described by the expression خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ i.e., He created you from clay (6 : 3), which means that after having received a sprinkling of Divine Word man attained the power of discrimination by which he could distinguish between right and wrong. At the third stage which is called the stage of فَخَّار (baked pottery) man is tested and tried and is made to pass through the fire of trials and tribulations. So it is after he has successfully passed the tests and has attained spiritual maturity that he is received into Divine Presence.

16. And the Jinn He created from the flame of fire^a.⁴⁰⁵⁷

وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِنْ نَّارٍ^{١٦}

17. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ إِلَٰهٍ رَبِّكُمَا تُكْذِبِينَ^{١٧}

18. The Lord of the two Easts and the Lord of the two Wests^b!⁴⁰⁵⁸

رَبُّ الشَّرْقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ^{١٨}

19. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ إِلَٰهٍ رَبِّكُمَا تُكْذِبِينَ^{١٩}

20. ^cHe has made the two bodies of water flow. They will *one day* meet.⁴⁰⁵⁹

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيْنَ^{٢٠}

21. Between them there is *at present* a barrier; they encroach not *one upon the other*.⁴⁰⁶⁰

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيْنَ^{٢١}

^a7 : 13 ; 15 : 28 ; 38 : 77. ^b2 : 116 ; 26 : 29. ^c25 : 54 ; 27 : 62 ; 35 : 13.

4057. Commentary :

For a detailed note on the creation of the *Jinn* from fire, see 15 : 28.

4058. Commentary :

Every spot on earth, in relation to other spots, is an East and a West. This phenomenon is described as the two Easts and the two Wests. Moreover, the earth being round, the East of the Eastern Hemisphere is the West of the Western Hemisphere and the West of the Western Hemisphere is the East of the Eastern Hemisphere and thus there are two Easts and two Wests. In the modern political parlance the two Easts may be the Near East and the Far East, and the two Wests, Europe and America. The verse seems to signify that, God being the Lord of the whole world, the light of the Qur'an will first spread in the East and then will illumine the West and thus the "whole earth will shine with the light of her God" (39 : 70).

4059. Commentary :

See next verse.

4060. Commentary :

"The two bodies of water" referred to in the preceding verse may be the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand and the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean on the other, particularly the former two seas. The verse embodies a great prophecy which was remarkably fulfilled in the latter half of the nineteenth century when the Suez and the Panama Canals were constructed, the former linking the first two seas and the latter the mighty Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The world had to wait for thirteen long centuries to see the fulfilment of this prophecy, in an age of new and great discoveries and inventions in the material world. It was in the fitness of time that, concurrently, equally great discoveries should have been made in the spiritual world, the fulfilment of the above prophecy being one of them. Or البحرین (the two bodies of water) may signify the physical and spiritual sciences. In this sense of the word the verses would mean that the two sciences—natural laws and Divine revelation, were mistakenly considered to be at logger-heads,

22. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

23. There come out from them pearls and coral.⁴⁰⁶¹

24. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

25. And His are the lofty ships reared aloft on the sea like mountains^a.⁴⁰⁶²

26. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?⁴⁰⁶³

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشِئُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٢٥﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

^a16 : 15; 35 : 13; 42 : 33.

and a barrier seemed to have kept them apart, till, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the great Divine Reformer of the age, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement, succeeded in lifting that barrier and by his powerful writings unfolded the mighty truth that, instead of being antagonistic, these two sciences were corroborative of, and complementary to, each other, the one being the Work of God, and the other His Word. In this way the two seas were made to join each other.

4061. Commentary :

Curiously enough pearls and corals are found in both the Suez and Panama Canals. Spiritually speaking, the verse would signify that physical sciences and Divine revelation both contain treasures of inestimable value.

4062. Important Words :

الجوار (ships) is the plural of جارية which is fem. act. part. from جرى which means, it flowed. جارية means, a ship because of its running upon the sea; the sun; a girl or young

woman; a boon or blessing bestowed by God upon His servants, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

الاعلام is the plural of علم ('alamun) which is derived from علم ('alama). علمه means, he marked it. علم means, an impression or impress; a footstep, track or trace of thing erected on the way for guidance; a banner, flag or standard; a minaret; a mountain or long mountain; the chief of a people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse contains a reference to modern "leviathans," which ride the seas like mountains. The Sūra seems to deal with the progress and prosperity of the Western nations which is the result of their making use of the great sea-routes for extending their commerce and trade.

4063. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a befitting sequel to the description of the great boons and blessings bestowed upon mankind by God as mentioned in the foregoing verses.

R. 2 27. All that is on it (earth) will pass away^{a. 4064}

28. And there will remain *only* the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.⁴⁰⁶⁵

29. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

30. Of Him do beg all that are in the heavens and the earth. Every day He reveals *Himself* in a different state.⁴⁰⁶⁶

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ٢٧

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ٢٨

فَيَايَا آلَاءَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ٢٩

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي

شَأْنٍ ٣٠

^a28 : 89.

4064. Commentary :

Man with all his great works and achievements and all those things that have been created for his use and service, in fact, the whole universe, is subject to decay and death and is eventually destined to perish. God alone will abide because He is Self-Subsisting, All Sustaining, Independent and Besought of all. See next verse.

4065. Important Words :

For وجه (person) see 2 : 113. Among other things the word means, "that which is under the care of God" or "to which God directs His attention." In 28 : 89, we have كل شيء هالك إلا وجهه *i.e.*, everything will perish except that which is under the care and protection of God or that by which His pleasure is sought. The word also means, the thing itself; object and motive; favour or countenance as جعل ذاك لوجه الله *i.e.*, he did it in order to obtain the favour of God (Lane & Agrab).

Commentary :

The verse embodies a very sound and solid argument to prove and support God's existence.

It purports to say that since the earth is to be reduced to nothing and heavenly bodies all brought to nought and the whole material universe made non-existent, still human reason demands that there should be a being who should remain and who should never die nor be subject to change or decay. Such a Being is God Who created the whole universe and Who is the First and Final Cause of all things. The present and the previous verse point to two immutable laws of nature working simultaneously, *viz*: (1) every thing is subject to decline, decadence and death, and (2) compliance with Divine laws ensures continuity of life.

4066. Commentary :

The verse signifies that all creatures depend for their life and sustenance on God Who is their Creator, Sustainer and Nourisher. He alone is Independent and the Besought of all. His attributes know no limit or count, and keep finding their manifestations in diverse ways all the time. He is very Kind and Merciful to him who deserves His Mercy and is Severe in punishing him who incurs His displeasure.

31. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَا أَيُّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32. Soon shall We attend to you, O ye two big groups!⁴⁰⁶⁷

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَا أَيُّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34. O company of Jinn and men! if you have power to go beyond the confines of the heavens and the earth, then do go. But you cannot go save with authority.⁴⁰⁶⁸

يَعُوشِرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

4067. Important Words :

سنفرغ (We shall soon attend) is formed from فرغ. They say فرغ من العمل i.e., he was or became free from occupation; he became free or unoccupied. فرغ له واليه means, he made him or it his exclusive object to which he directed himself (Lane & Aqrab).

الثقلان (two big groups). ثقل means, it was or became heavy, weighty or ponderous; it was or became heavy, weighty or preponderant ideally; it was or became onerous, oppressive or grievous; he was or became heavy, slow, lazy; wanting in activity, ability or intelligence; he became stupid. الثقلان meaning two weighty things, may signify "the men" and "the Jinn" as the context shows, or it may signify the Arabs and the non-Arabs (Lane, Aqrab & Muḥīṭ). In the present political parlance, however, the word may signify the two main blocs—Russia and its satellites on one side and the United States of America and its allies on the other. The context seems to support this meaning. The word may also signify the Capitalist and the Labour classes.

Commentary :

The verse seems to hold a severe warning to

the United States of America with its allies, and Communist Russia with its satellites. The whole world practically has become divided into these two main groups; everyone of the so-called neutral countries is inclined to one or the other of them. From the way in which these two great Powers are behaving, it seems that the world is perilously standing on the brink of an abyss. Any day they may be locked into mortal conflict, completely destroying man's accumulated labours of centuries spent in developing arts and sciences, and inevitably rendering life on earth practically extinct.

4068. Important Words :

معشر (company) is derived from عاشر and معاشرهم means, he mixed with them; consorted with them; held social and familiar intercourse with them. معاشر among other things means, any company of men whose state of circumstances is one (Lane & Aqrab). This meaning of the word shows that معاشر الجن والانس are the two classes of men and signify the same as الثقلان mentioned in v. 32 above.

Commentary :

The verse has been variously interpreted :

(i) According to one interpretation the

35. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَا أَيُّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكْذِبَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. There shall be sent against you a flame of fire, and smoke; and you shall not be able to help yourselves.⁴⁰⁶⁹

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوْاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا

تَنْتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَا أَيُّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكْذِبَانِ ﴿٣٧﴾

scientists and philosophers who are proud of the great advance they have made in material sciences have been warned that they cannot, however high they might rise in knowledge and science, so completely comprehend the laws of nature governing the universe as to overpower and master them. Try as they might, they will fail in their quest. This interpretation is in accordance with the context. According to another interpretation which also agrees with the context, the verse warns sinners: let them dare to break through the confines of the heavens and earth, they shall not be able to defy Divine laws with impunity and escape Divine punishment. It may also point to the making of rockets, sputniks, etc., by means of which the Russians and the Americans seek to reach heavenly bodies. They are told that at best they can reach only those planets which are visible to human eye. Beyond that their efforts shall fail. God's universe is unfathomable.

4069. Important Words :

شواظ (flame) is derived from شاط. They say شاط بفلان i.e., he abused such a one and accused him. شاط به الغضب means, he became excited; his anger became enkindled. شواظ means, flame or fire without smoke; heat of fire

or sun; flame of fire; thirst or vehement thirst (Lane & Aqrab).

نحاس (smoke) is derived from نحس. They say أنحست النار i.e., the fire had much smoke. نحاس means, molten copper; fire; sparks that fall from brass or iron when it is beaten with the hammer; smoke; smoke in which there is no flame (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary :

The verse points to the most destructive and dreadful punishment that might overtake the two hostile camps, if they did not desist from defying Divine commandments. God's wrath has become excited for "what man has wrought with his hands" (30:42), and the world seems to stand on the brink of a terrible conflagration which threatens to consume in its flames the entire human civilization and to make life extinct. Man had a foretaste of Divine punishment in the last two World Wars but what is yet in store for him staggers imagination. The verse gives a clear picture of the coming catastrophe in the form of nuclear and cosmic horrors. The words فلا تنتصران signify that the two hostile camps will not be able to escape God's punishment, try as they might.

38. And when the heaven is rent asunder^a, and becomes red like red hide—⁴⁰⁷⁰

39. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

40. On that day neither man nor Jinn will be asked about his sin.⁴⁰⁷¹

41. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

42. The guilty will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.⁴⁰⁷²

43. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

44. This is the Hell which the guilty deny,^b

45. Between it and the fierce boiling water^c will they go round.⁴⁰⁷³

فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ^{٤٠}

فِي أَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبِينَ^{٤١}

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ^{٤٢}

فِي أَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبِينَ^{٤٣}

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي^{٤٤}
وَالْأُقْدَامِ^{٤٥}

فِي أَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبِينَ^{٤٦}

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ^{٤٧}

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَيْمِمْ^{٤٨} إِنِ

^a 69 : 17; 84 : 2.

^b 52 : 15.

^c 22 : 20; 44 : 49; 56 : 42-44.

4070. Commentary :

What a graphic picture of the threatened punishment!

4071. Commentary :

The verse means that the misdeeds of the guilty will be writ large on their faces so that they will not be asked whether or not they had committed those crimes. As mentioned elsewhere in the Qur'an (41 : 21), the very organs of the bodies of disbelievers will bear witness against them. The next verse further explains this point.

4072. Important Words :

الناصية (forelocks) is the plural of ناصية. The expression أَخَذَ بِنَاصِيَتِهِ is used to denote one's extreme disgrace and humiliation (Lane & Aqrab).

4073. Commentary :

The foregoing few verses together with the present one seem to point to the state of restlessness which will seize humanity when the two blocs referred to above are pitted against each other and the fear of atomic war will, like the Sword of Democles, hang over their heads. The present international groupings and tensions are bound to lead to an armed conflict of un-paralleled destructiveness. The conflict itself would be a veritable Hell; but preparations for it have brought about conditions which are not far removed from perpetual torment of one kind or other.

As applied to the next world, the verse may mean that the evil deeds of disbelievers and their ill-gotten gains will assume the form of the fire of Hell and boiling water. They will

46. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

R. 3 47. But for him who fears to stand before his Lord there are two Gardens⁴⁰⁷⁴

وَلَسَنُ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَيْنِ ﴿٣٧﴾

48. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

479 : 41-42.

burn in the fire of Hell and will be given boiling water to quench their thirst. See also 14 : 17-18.

4074. Commentary :

The foregoing verses have dealt with the very important subject, viz., that progress and advance in material sciences which makes man devote his whole attention and effort to the pursuit of physical pleasures and comforts and leads him away from God, results in loss of mental poise and peace which in the Quranic terminology is also called Hell—another name for international conflicts and wars. In the present and the following few verses we are told that pursuit of spiritual knowledge and higher moral values gives man perfect contentment and equanimity in this life and in the Hereafter.

The “two Gardens” referred to in the present verse may signify peace of mind which is the result of leading a good life and freedom from gnawing cares and anxieties which come in the wake of life spent in the pursuit of material pleasures and comforts. One Paradise consists in giving up one’s desires for the sake of God in this world and the other in being blessed with God’s pleasure in the next. A true believer perpetually basks in the sun of God’s

grace in this life which cares cannot disturb. This is Paradise upon earth which is granted to a God-fearing man and in which he constantly dwells; the promised heaven in the next world is only an image of the present Paradise, being an embodiment of the spiritual blessings which such a man enjoys in this life. It is to this paradisiacal state of a true believer that the two Quranic verses refer, viz., “We are your friends in this life and in the Hereafter,” (41 : 32) and “for them are glad tidings in the present life and also in the Hereafter” (10 : 65).

The “two Gardens” may also refer to the mighty Byzantine and Iranian Empires of which the conquest was promised to the Muslims. The Holy Prophet in a vision was given the keys of the palaces of the Emperors of Constantinople and Iran. The vision was literally fulfilled during the caliphate of ‘Umar when these countries were conquered by Muslim armies. The fact that in a *ḥadīth*, Sāihān and Jaiḥān, the two rivers of Iran; and Furāt (the Euphrates) and Nīl (the Nile) have been spoken of as the rivers of Paradise (Muslim), lends powerful support to the view that the “Gardens” spoken of in the verse were the fertile valleys watered by these two sets, each of two rivers.

49. Having many varieties of trees.⁴⁰⁷⁵

50. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

51. In both of them there are two fountains flowing freely.⁴⁰⁷⁶

52. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

53. Therein will be every kind of fruit in pairs.⁴⁰⁷⁷

54. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

55. They will recline on couches over carpets,^b the linings of which will be of thick brocade. And the ripe fruit of the two Gardens will be within easy reach.⁴⁰⁷⁸

ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِينِ ﴿٤١﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

فِيهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَاطِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۖ وَ

جَنَّاتٍ الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

^a44 : 56; 52 : 23; 56 : 21.

^b18 : 32; 52 : 21; 76 : 14; 83 : 24.

4075. Commentary :

Just as in the present life true believers had undergone many kinds of sacrifice for the sake of their Lord and had done all sorts of good and righteous deeds, so in the next life those sacrifices and good works will assume the form of flowers and fruits of various hues and tastes. This seems to be the meaning of this verse.

4076. Commentary :

The "two fountains running freely" may be the spiritual embodiments of حقوق الله (the obligations owed to God) and حقوق العباد (the obligations a Muslim owes to his fellow-beings) which the believers had fully and faithfully discharged in this life. The discharge of these two obligations would assume the form of two fountains in the Hereafter. As a true believer ceaselessly continues to discharge these obliga-

tions, the fountains have been depicted as constantly flowing.

4077. Commentary :

Again the word زوجان (pairs) may spiritually represent two kinds of righteous works of the believers—(1) those they had done for their own spiritual advancement and (2) those services which they had rendered to their fellow-beings.

4078. Important Words :

جنى (ripe fruits) is derived from جنى. They say جنى الشجرة i.e., he gathered or plucked the fruit from the tree while it was fresh. جنى العلى means, he acquired eminence or nobility. جنى means, whatever is gathered or plucked from the tree while fresh; fruit just gathered or plucked; fruit ready to be plucked; ripe fruit (Lane).

56. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. Therein will *also* be *chaste maidens* of modest gaze,^a whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—⁴⁰⁷⁹

فِيهِنَّ قَصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ
وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٥٧﴾

58. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَنِ ﴿٥٨﴾

٤٣٧ : ٤٩; ٣٨ : ٥٣.

Commentary :

Three times the words “two Gardens” have been used in this *Sūra*. This is to emphasize that apart from the great blessings and boons of Paradise in the next world, true believers will have all the good things of this world also. The *Sūra* was revealed early at Mecca when only a few persons had accepted Islam and even those few were very poor and without worldly means and were being harried and harassed and most of them had to take refuge in Abyssinia from the bitter persecution of the Quraish. It was then that the promise was made to them that one day they would recline on couches placed on rich carpets. This Divine promise was literally fulfilled in the life-time of the very Muslims who, while at Mecca, did not know where to lay their heads.

The “inner linings being of thick brocade” implies a beautiful hint that the inner-self of a believer is purer and more beautiful than his outer-self.

4079. Commentary :

In the foregoing verses mention was made of gardens, couches, fruits, etc., that believers will get in the “two Gardens.” In order to complete their peace and happiness, they will also enjoy the company of good companions. And there can be no better companion for a person than

a beautiful and virtuous wife. The Quranic Paradise is not exclusively reserved for righteous men. Righteous women will be equally entitled to it.

It will be noticed that purity of heart of the companions of believers is given precedence over the beauty of their persons referred to in v. 59. The expression قَصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ signifies that their whole attention would be devoted to God and they would not even cast a look at any other thing beside their Lord and Creator, and far from their bodies being touched by any man, even impure thoughts will not find access to their hearts, the word *جَن* also signifying those invisible things that excite carnal passions in the mind.

It is relevant to state here again that according to Islamic conception the blessings of Paradise would resemble the pleasures of the life on earth. There will be palaces, gardens, rivers, trees, fruits, wives, children, friends, etc., only the nature of these things would be different from that of the things of this world. They would be so highly spiritual that human mind cannot conceive of them. But their existence cannot be denied. See also 32 : 18 & 52 : 21.

Incidentally, the verse repudiates the false idea that women will not go to Paradise.

59. As if they were rubies and small pearls^a.⁴⁰⁸⁰

60. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

61. Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness.⁴⁰⁸¹

62. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

63. And besides these two, there are two *other* Gardens—⁴⁰⁸²

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالسَّرَّاجَانُ ﴿٥٩﴾

فَيَا بَىٰ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ ﴿٦١﴾

فَيَا بَىٰ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

وَمِنْ دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ ﴿٦٣﴾

^a56 : 24.

4080. Commentary :

Whereas in v. 57 above, purity of mind and heart of the consorts of believers in Paradise has been mentioned, the verse under comment speaks of the beauty of their persons. That women mentioned in these verses are the virtuous wives of believers in this life, is apparent from a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, *viz*: نساء الدنيا أفضل من الحور العين *i.e.*, the believing women of this world are superior to the *huris* of the next.

4081. Commentary :

How adequately and beautifully the blessings of Paradise have been summed up in this brief verse! The word “goodness” is inclusive and fully expressive of all the conceivable favours that will be bestowed upon believers in the next life, and what greater good there could be than the pleasure of God (رضوان الله) which believers will get in Paradise. (3 : 16)

According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, إحسان means, “worship God as if you are seeing Him or at least He is seeing you” (Mishkāt). This means that in all his deeds and actions

God is constantly before the eyes of a believer and as a reward for his actions he receives God’s pleasure—the sum total of all the blessings of Heaven.

4082. Commentary :

The “two Gardens” mentioned in v. 47, may be the Gardens of Paradise; the “two Gardens” referred to in this verse may be the gardens of this world. The Muslims were promised gardens in the next world and as a proof of the fulfilment of this Divine promise they were also promised the gardens of this world which indeed they came to possess when they conquered the fertile valleys of Syria and Iraq. But the description of the “two Gardens” mentioned in v. 47 being different from that in the present verse shows that two categories of believers have been mentioned in this *Sūra*; the believers to whom “Gardens” mentioned in v.47 have been promised seem to be of a higher spiritual status than those to whom “Gardens” mentioned in the verse under comment have been promised. A careful study of the relevant verses clearly brings out this fact. These two classes of believers have been mentioned in the next *Sūra*, in vv. 11 and 28, respectively.

64. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65. Dark green with foliage.⁴⁰⁸³

مُدْهَامَتَيْنِ ﴿٦٥﴾

66. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67. Therein *also* will be two springs gushing forth with water.⁴⁰⁸⁴

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَاحَتَيْنِ ﴿٦٧﴾

68. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

4083. Important Words :

مدهامتان (dark green with foliage) is derived from ادھام. They say ادھام الزرع i.e., the seed produce became of a dark green colour by reason of abundance of moisture or irrigation. ادھامت الروضة means, the meadow became of a dark green colour. حديقة مدهامة means, a walled garden, having its green inclining to black (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Whereas the “Gardens” mentioned in v. 47 above are described as “having many varieties of trees” which points to the vast variety of the good works of the believers to whom they are promised, the “Gardens” mentioned in the verse under comment are described as “dark green with foliage” which indicates the intensity of the goodness of their works.

4084. Important Words :

نضاختان (gushing forth with water) is derived from نضخ. They say نضخ الماء i.e., the water

gushed forth from the fountain or boiled forth vehemently. عين نضاحة means, a copious spring of water or a spring that gushes forth or boils forth copiously (Lane).

Commentary :

In the present verse and in v. 51 above two different descriptions of the fountains and springs promised to believers have been given. In v. 51 fountains promised to believers have been described as flowing freely and ceaselessly while in the present verse these springs are described as gushing forth with water. This signifies that believers to whom springs mentioned in v. 51 have been promised are of a higher spiritual status than believers to whom springs mentioned in the present verse have been promised ; since believers of former category are engaged in doing good to others ceaselessly and freely without any idea or expectation of reward while those of the latter class do good works out of natural impulse but the doing of good is mainly confined to themselves.

69. In both of them there will be *all kinds of fruit*^a, and dates and pomegranates.⁴⁰⁸⁵

70. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

71. Therein will be *maidens*, good and beautiful—⁴⁰⁸⁶

72. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

73. Fair maidens with lovely black eyes, well-guarded in pavilions—⁴⁰⁸⁷

74. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

75. Whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—

76. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

77. ^bReclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets.⁴⁰⁸⁸

فِيهِمَا فَالِكِهَةُ وَنَخْلٌ وَسُرَّاقَانٌ ﴿٦٩﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ الْإِلَهِ رَبِّكُمَا تَكْذِبِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧١﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ الْإِلَهِ رَبِّكُمَا تَكْذِبِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٣﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ الْإِلَهِ رَبِّكُمَا تَكْذِبِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

فَيَا أَيُّ الْإِلَهِ رَبِّكُمَا تَكْذِبِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

مُتَكِينِينَ عَلَى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ ﴿٧٧﴾

^a36 : 58; 38 : 52; 43 : 74.

^bSee 55 : 55.

4085. Commentary :

Whereas in the “Gardens” referred to in v. 47 are to be found fruits *of every kind in pairs* (v. 53) fruits in the “Garden” mentioned in this verse are of a limited variety, especially dates and pomegranates.

4086. Commentary :

As compared with the words “good and beautiful” used with regard to the maidens in the present verse which possess only a general connotation, the words “rubies and pearls” used in v. 59 above have a particular significance and are expressive of beauty of special excellence.

4087. Commentary :

The words قاصرات الطرف (restraining their

glances) in v. 57 evidently are expressive of chastity and modesty of a higher degree than the expression مقصورات في الخيام (confined to pavilions) in the verse under comment.

4088. Important Words :

عَبْقَرِيٌّ is relative noun from عَبَقَرٌ, a place which the Arabs asserted to be the land of the Jinn; hence it is applied as an epithet to anything wondered at or admired, for the skillfulness which it exhibits, or the excellence of its manufacture and its strength; or to any work great in estimation, and delicate. It is both singular and plural and the feminine is عَبْقَرِيَّةٌ. They say ثياب عَبْقَرِيَّةٌ i.e., clothes or garments of admirable manufacture, so called in relation to a certain town عَبَقَر in Yemen

78. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?⁴⁰⁸⁹

79. Blessed is the name of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.⁴⁰⁹⁰

فَيَايَ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٤٩﴾

in which clothes or garments and carpets are figured and variegated and are of the utmost beauty. Thus عبقرى means, a kind of carpets variously dyed and figured; perfect or complete applied to anything; a lord or chief of men; one who has none above him and is strong. هذا عبقرى قوم means, this is a chief or Lord of a people. The word is also applied as an epithet denoting superlativeness of any quality. ظلم عبقرى means, an excessive tyranny. The Holy Prophet is reported to have related a dream, mentioning Umar and said: فلم أر عبقرىا يفري فريه i.e., I have not seen a chief of a people do his wonderful deed. عبقرى حسان means, beautiful variegated carpets (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Again the words used in v. 55 about believers show that they possess a greater dignity, respect and authority than those to whom the present verse refers. With this verse the comparison between the two categories of believers specifically mentioned in the next *Sūra* i.e., “the foremost” (56 : 11) and “those on the right hand” (56 : 28) comes to an end.

4089. Commentary:

It is not without significance that this verse has been used as many as 31 times in the present *Sūra*. The *Sūra* seems particularly to refer to the great favours and blessings which God has bestowed upon man. In view of these multifarious and multitudinous favours the repeated use of the verse seems quite appropriate. But the *Sūra* also speaks of the unprecedentedly destructive Divine punishment in the form of atomic wars which will overtake man if he does not repent and mend his ways. This repeated warning of an imminent danger is also a blessing in disguise.

4090. Commentary:

The verse signifies that those who benefit by the great favours that God has bestowed upon them and walk in the path of truth and righteousness will be granted more favours by the Lord of Honour but those who, on the contrary, defy Divine laws and adopt evil ways will be punished by the Lord of Majesty.

CHAPTER 56

AL-WĀQI'AH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the last of the group of seven Chapters beginning with *Sūra Qāf*. These seven *Sūras* were revealed at Mecca, more or less at the same time, in the early years of the Holy Prophet's ministry. Naturally, therefore, they are very much similar in tone and tenor; but, in no other case perhaps, is this similarity so marked as it is between this *Sūra* and *Sūra Al-Raḥmān*. The subject in *Sūra Al-Raḥmān* is completed in this *Sūra*, and thus the *Sūra* forms a befitting sequel to *Sūra Al-Raḥmān*. In *Sūra Al-Raḥmān*, for instance, three groups of people—(a) those fortunate ones who are granted special nearness to God, (b) the general body of believers who have achieved Divine pleasure, and (c) the rejectors of Divine Messengers—were referred to only by implication. In the present *Sūra*, however, they have been expressly mentioned. The *Sūra* takes its title, like the *Sūras* of this group, from its first verse, and like them, it deals particularly with the important subjects of the Resurrection, Revelation, and the repudiation of idolatry, appropriately revealed early at Mecca when the preaching of the Quranic Message was directed exclusively to the idolatrous Quraish. The seven *Sūras* also contain prophecies about the great and glorious future of Islam, side by side with direct and emphatic mention of the inevitability of the Resurrection, thus drawing attention to the inescapable conclusion that the fulfilment of those prophecies would prove that the Resurrection is also an undeniable fact.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that the Great and Inevitable Event which was foretold in the preceding *Sūra* will most surely come to pass, and when it comes to pass the earth will be shaken to its depths, and the mountains shall be shattered, causing a new world to emerge from the ashes of the old. As a result of this Great Event people will be sorted out into three classes : (a) the fortunate ones enjoying God's special nearness, (b) the true and righteous believers receiving handsome reward for their good deeds, and (c) the unfortunate disbelievers who rejected God's Message and opposed and persecuted His Messengers being punished for their evil deeds. The *Sūra* then proceeds to give a graphic description of the Divine blessings and favours in store for the first two classes, which is followed by a description of the punishment which will be meted out to the deniers of the Divine Message. Then, the *Sūra* advances the usual argument of the creation of man from a seminal drop and of its development into a full-fledged human being,

to prove his second birth after death. Towards its end the *Sūra* reverts to the subject with which it had begun and explains that the great reformation to which it had referred in the opening verses will be brought about by the Qur'ān which is indubitably the revealed Word of God, and which is protected and guarded like a precious treasure, and the wealth of whose teachings is revealed only to the righteous and pure of heart. The *Sūra* closes with a beautiful homily, viz., that when the inevitable end of all life is death, from which there is no escape, why should man be neglectful of that hard fact and consign God to oblivion ?

سُورَةُ الْوَاقِعَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful^a.⁴⁰⁹¹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the Event comes to pass^b—⁴⁰⁹²

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ②

3. None can say that its coming to pass is lie^c—⁴⁰⁹³

لَيْسَ يَوْفَعُهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ③

4. Some it will bring low, others it will exalt.⁴⁰⁹⁴

خَافِضَةٌ رَافِعَةٌ ④

5. "When the earth will be shaken with a terrible shaking"^d,⁴⁰⁹⁵

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b52 : 8 ; 70 : 2.

^c52 : 9 ; 70 : 3.

^d50 : 45 ; 84 : 4.

4091. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

4092. Commentary :

The "Inevitable Event" referred to in the verse is the Final Resurrection. Or it may signify total annihilation of idolatry from Arabia and complete defeat and discomfiture of the idolatrous Quraish. It may also signify the appearance of a great religious Reformer when the forces of darkness are routed, particularly the great reformation brought about by the Holy Prophet.

4093. Commentary :

The word كاذبة is fem. act. part. from كذب and means, one who tells a lie. It is used here as مصدر to impart emphasis to its meaning (Jarir). The verse means that nothing can avert that great event. Or that there is no belying its coming to pass or denying the fact that it will come to pass. Its happening is as sure as anything. It is a dead certainty.

4094. Commentary :

The verse means that the "Inevitable

Event" referred to in the preceding verse will bring about a great revolution in the lives of men. A new world will come into being, the high and the mighty will be laid low and the despised and down-trodden will be exalted. In fact, the advent of every great Divine Reformer is attended with changes of far-reaching consequences. Elsewhere speaking about the object of Moses's advent the Qur'ān says :

و نريد أن نمن على الذين استضعفوا في الأرض
ونجعلهم أئمةً ونجعلهم الوارثين ونمكن لهم في الأرض

i.e., And We desired to show favour unto those who had been considered weak in the earth, and to make them leaders and to make them inheritors of Our favours, and to establish them in the earth (28 : 6-7).

4095. Important Words :

رجت (shall be shaken). رجه means, he put it in motion or in a state of commotion or agitation; he put it in a state of violent motion; or convulsion or made it to shake, quake or quiver. رج الباب means, he shook the door violently (Lane & Aqrab).

6. And the mountains will be shattered —a *complete* shattering^a.⁴⁰⁹⁶

وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۝

7. They shall *all* become like dust particles scattered about.⁴⁰⁹⁷

فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا ۝

8. And you shall be *divided into* three groups.⁴⁰⁹⁸

وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً ۝

9. *First*, those on the right hand—how *lucky* are those on the right hand!—⁴⁰⁹⁹

فَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۝ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۝

10. *Second*, those on the left hand—how *unlucky* are those on the left hand!—⁴¹⁰⁰

وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمِ ۝ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمِ ۝

^a20 : 106 ; 70 : 10 ; 101 : 6.

Commentary :

The verse means that the whole land of Arabia will be shaken to its foundations. Old beliefs, ideas, moral values, customs, ways of living, etc., will undergo a complete change. In fact, the whole old order will die, giving place to a completely new one.

The verse along with its predecessor and successors is equally applicable to Resurrection after death, to the Last Judgment.

4096. Important Words :

بُسَّتِ (shall be shattered). بَسَّه means, he crumbled it. بُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا means, the mountains shall be crumbled with a vehement crumbling like flour and levelled to earth and reduced to powder and scattered in the wind (Lane).

Commentary :

الْجِبَالِ (the high and the mighty) shall be laid low.

4097. Commentary :

What a graphic description of the great change that was to be brought about by the

Holy Prophet, and of how the prophecy was fulfilled!

4098. Commentary :

The verse applies particularly to the time of the Holy Prophet. But it can also be applied to the time of every great Divine Reformer. Whenever a Prophet of God or a great Divine Reformer preaches his Message, people become divided into three groups which have been mentioned in detail in the verses that follow.

4099. Commentary :

In v. 28 below اصحاب اليمين have been described as اصحاب اليمين i.e., fellows or companions of the right hand. Elsewhere (75 : 3) the Qur'an applies the term النفس اللوامة i.e., self-accusing spirit, to this group of believers, since they work out such a transformation in their souls as to become moral beings in the true sense of the word.

4100. Important Words :

اصحاب المشأمة (those on the left hand). مشأمة is derived from أشأم which means,

11. *Third*, the foremost; they are the foremost;⁴¹⁰¹

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12. They will have achieved nearness to God.

أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13. *They will be* in the Gardens of Bliss—

فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿١٣﴾

14. A large party from among the early believers,⁴¹⁰²

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. And a few from the later ones,

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

16. *Seated* on couches inwrought with gold and jewels,⁴¹⁰³

عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

17. "Reclining thereon, facing each other.

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

^a37 : 45; 55 : 55; 76 : 14.

he desired the left, as أَيْمَن signifies, he desired the right. مَا أَشْأَمَهُ means, how unlucky he is! مَشْئِمَةٌ means, the left side or direction; contrary to يَمَنَةٌ and مَيْمَنَةٌ. They say نظرت يَمَنَةً وَشْأَمَةً i.e., I looked in the right and in the left direction (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In v. 42 this group of disbelievers have been called اصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ i.e., companions of the left hand. In 12 : 54 the Qur'ān describes them as النِّفْسُ الْآمَارَةُ (the spirit prone to evil) i.e., those who choose not to walk in the light of wisdom and knowledge but are led into iniquities and immoral paths.

4101. Commentary :

السَّابِقُونَ (foremost) are those believers who have scaled the highest peaks of spiritual progress. They are completely united with their Creator and cannot, as it were, exist in separation from Him. In Quranic terminology (89 : 28) they are called النِّفْسُ الْمَطْمَئِنَّةُ

(the soul at rest). This is the highest stage of spiritual perfection which a believer can attain.

4102. Important Words :

ثُلَّةٌ (large party) is derived from ثَلَّ which means, he demolished a thing. ثُلَّةٌ means, a party or company of men or a large number of men. They say فَلَانٌ لَا يَفْرُقُ بَيْنَ الثَّلَّةِ وَالْثَلَّةِ i.e., such a one does not distinguish between ثُلَّةٌ (thallatun) i.e., a flock of sheep. and ثُلَّةٌ (thullatun) i.e., a company of men.

Commentary :

The word الْأَوَّلِينَ may refer to the early Companions of the Holy Prophet or to the early Companions of any great Divine Reformer, preferably to the former.

4103. Commentary :

The blessings of Paradise to be bestowed upon السَّابِقُونَ i.e., those lucky believers who will be favoured with special Divine nearness

18. "There will wait on them youths,
who will not age,⁴¹⁰⁴

19. *Carrying* goblets^b and ewers and
cups *filled* out of a flowing spring—

20. No headache will they get there-
from, nor will they be intoxicated^e—⁴¹⁰⁵

21. And *carrying* such fruits as they
(the foremost believers) choose,^d

22. And flesh of birds as they may
desire.^e

23. And *there will be* fair maidens
with wide, lovely eyes,^f

24. Like pearls, well preserved,

25. As a reward for what they
did.⁴¹⁰⁶

يُطَوِّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَدَانِ مُخَلَّدُونَ^{١٨}

بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ^{١٩}

لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْفَوْنَ^{٢٠}

وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ^{٢١}

وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ^{٢٢}

وَحُودٍ عَيْنٍ^{٢٣}

كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ^{٢٤}

جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ^{٢٥}

^a37 : 46 ; 76 : 20.

^b43 : 72 ; 76 : 16.

^c37 : 48.

^d52 : 23 ; 55 : 53.

^e52 : 23.

^f44 : 55 ; 52 : 21.

mentioned in vv. 16—27 of the present *Sūra* closely resemble those Divine gifts which have been mentioned in vv. 47—62 of *Sūra* Al-Raḥmān. This shows that the believers referred to in these verses of *Sūra* Al-Raḥmān are of the class of السابقون *i.e.*, those who have been granted special nearness to God.

4104. Commentary :

The verse points to the innocence and perpetual freshness of the servants that will wait upon true believers.

4105. Important Words :

لايصدعون (no headache will they get) is derived from صدع (*sada'a*). صدعه means, he split it so as to divide it in halves. صدع الحق means, he spoke the truth openly or aloud, discriminating between it and falsehood. صدعه (*sadda'a*)

means, it affected him with headache as though it made his head to split (Lane & Aqrab).

لاينفون (nor will they be intoxicated) is derived from نَفَزَ . They say نَفَزَتِ الْبئر (*nazafat*) *i.e.*, the well became empty, all the water having been taken out of it. أَنْفَزَ الرَّجُلُ means, the man became intoxicated, the spring of his senses having exhausted; his argument became exhausted in litigation. نَفَزَ فُلَانٌ (*nuzifa*) means, such a one became intoxicated, the root-meaning of نَفَزَ (*nazfun*) being to become exhausted (Aqrab).

4106. Commentary :

The verse signifies that in this world believers will have the blessings enumerated above because of their sacrifice and suffering for the cause of Truth, and in the next world the good

26. They will not hear therein any vain or sinful talk,^a

27. Except only the word of *salutation*, 'Peace, peace.'⁴¹⁰⁷

28. ^bAnd as for those on the right hand—how *lucky* are those on the right hand!—

29. They will be amidst thornless lote-trees,⁴¹⁰⁸

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيهٖٓا ۝١٩

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا ۝٢٠

وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۖ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۝٢١

فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ۝٢٢

^a19 : 63 ; 78 : 36 ; 88 : 12.

^b69 : 20; 84 : 8-9; 90 : 19.

deeds done by them in this world will assume the form of these blessings. The blessings mentioned in these verses (16—24) appear to be those which befit kings and princes, because they will be given to believers of the highest spiritual eminence.

4107. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse, like many other verses of the Qur'ān, effectively repudiate all those foolish notions about a sensual Paradise which ignorant and evil-minded carpers and critics of Islam pretend to find in the Qur'ān, and gives an insight into its nature, essence and reality. The Heaven as conceived and promised to Muslims by the Qur'ān would be a place of spiritual bliss where no sin, vain or idle talk, or lying will find access (78 : 36). All the blessings of Paradise would find their culmination and consummation in peace—complete peace of the mind and soul. And there could be no greater blessing than peace of mind. The Paradise promised to a Muslim has been designated as the "abode of peace" in the Qur'ān (6 : 128) ; the highest stage of spiritual development to which a believer can rise is that of the "soul at peace" (89 : 28) and the greatest gift which the dwellers of Paradise will receive from God will be "peace" (36 : 59), because God

Himself is the Author of peace (59 : 24). Such is the sublime Quranic conception of Paradise.

4108. Important Words :

For سدر (lote-trees) see 53 : 17.

مخضود (thornless) is derived from خضد which means, he broke wood or a branch or twig or a soft thing so that its parts did not separate; he bent without breaking wood or a branch or twig. They say خضد الشجر *i.e.*, he cut off or removed the thorns of the trees; مخضود means, a tree having its thorns removed, a thornless tree. The word also means, a tree having the branches bent by reason of the abundance of its fruit (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

When the shade of lote-tree becomes dense and crowded, it is very pleasant and in the hot and dry climate of Arabia the tired and fatigued travellers take shelter and find rest under it. The word سدر having been qualified by مخضود signifies that the trees of Paradise will not only give pleasant and plenteous shade but would also bend down on account of the abundance of their fruit, *i.e.*, the blessings of Paradise would both be pleasant and plentiful. See also 53 : 17.

30. And clustered bananas,⁴¹⁰⁹ وَطَلْحٍ مَّنْصُودٍ^{٣٠}
31. And extended shade,^a وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ^{٣١}
32. And flowing water,^b وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ^{٣٢}
33. And abundant fruit,^c وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ^{٣٣}
34. Neither failing, nor forbidden,⁴¹¹⁰ لَا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ^{٣٤}
35. And they will have noble spouses—⁴¹¹¹ وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ^{٣٥}
36. Verily, We have created them a good creation, إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَهُنَّ إِنْشَاءً^{٣٦}

^a4 : 58; 13 : 36.^b88 : 13.^cSee 56 : 21.**4109. Commentary :**

Whereas lote-tree mentioned in the preceding verse grows in dry climate, the banana requires plenty of water for its growth. The combining of *طَلْحٍ* and *سَدْرٍ* signifies that the fruits of Paradise will not only be plentiful and delightful but will be found in all climatic conditions.

4110. Commentary :

The blessings promised to the inmates of Paradise in this and other *Sūras* of the Qur'ān possess the following important qualities : (a) they will be in abundance; (b) they will be easily accessible and at the entire disposal of believers; (c) they will know no diminution or end; and (d) they will cause no discomfort or disease.

4111. Important Words :

فرش (spouses) is the plural of *فراش* which means, a thing spread on the ground for one

to sit upon; a bed; a man's wife; a woman's husband; the master or owner of a female slave. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said : *الولد للفراش وللعاهر الحجر* i.e., the child is for the husband or for the master of the bed who is the husband, or the owner of the woman, or for the bed; and for the adulterer shall be stone (Abū Dawūd, *kitāb al-Ṭalāq*). The word *فراش* also means, the nest of a bird; a house, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In order to complete their happiness and peace of mind, the believers will have for their companions pure, beautiful spouses of noble descent and high dignity. The promise may also be taken to have been fulfilled when the Byzantine and Persian Empires fell to their victorious arms. In the next life the believers will have these things conformably to the spiritual conditions obtaining there.

37. And made them virgins,⁴¹¹²

فَجَعَلْنَهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٣٧﴾

38. Loving, of equal age⁴¹¹³

عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾

39. With those on the right hand:

لِلْأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٣٩﴾

2 40. A large party from among the early *believers*.

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. And a large party from the later ones.

وَتُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

42. *But as for* those on the left hand^b—how *unlucky* are those on the left hand!—⁴¹¹⁴

وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ هَٰ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. *They will be* in the midst of scorching winds and scalding water^c,⁴¹¹⁵

فِي سُورٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

^a78 : 34. ^b69 : 26; 84 : 11; 90 : 20. ^c22 : 20; 44 : 49; 55 : 45.

4112. Important Words :

أَبْكَرَ (virgins) is the plural of بَكَرَ (*bikrun*) which means, a virgin; a man who has not touched a woman; an unpierced pearl; etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

4113. Important Words :

عُرُبًا (loving) is the plural of عَرِبَ which is derived from عَرَبَ (*'ariba*). They say عَرَبَتِ الْبُئْرَ i.e., the water of the well became abundant. عُرُوبَ means, a woman who loves her husband passionately and excessively and is obedient to him; also a woman disobedient to her husband and unfaithful to him (Lane & Aqrab).

أَتْرَابَ is the plural of تَرَبَّ which is derived from تَرَبَّ (*tariba*) which means, he was born at the same time with another, an equal in age; an equal; a match; a peer; having similar tastes, habits, views, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

A beautiful, chaste and faithful wife, having similar views and tastes and outlook on life with her husband is the greatest Divine blessing a person can possibly have. There will be good and virtuous women in Paradise, says the Qur'an, as there will be good and righteous men. It is good companionship that makes human life happy and complete.

4114 Commentary :

أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ is another name for أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ —those on the left hand.

4115. Commentary :

The disbelievers in the heat of their passions indulged in all sorts of evil activities. That heat will take the form of hot water and scorching heat.

44. And *under* the shadow of black smoke^a,⁴¹¹⁶

وَذَلِيلٍ مِّن يَّحْمُومٍ^{٣٣}

45. Neither cool nor of any good.

لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ^{٣٤}

46. Before this they lived a life of ease and plenty.⁴¹¹⁷

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ^{٣٥}

47. And used to persist in extreme sinfulness.

وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ^{٣٦}

48. And they were wont to say, 'What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we indeed be raised again^b,⁴¹¹⁸

وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ هَ إِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَّ

عِظَامًا ء إِنَّا لَنَبْعُثُوهَا^{٣٧}

49. 'And our fathers of yore too?'

أَوْ آبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ^{٣٨}

50. Say, 'Yes, the earlier ones and the later ones

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ^{٣٩}

51. 'Will all be gathered together unto the fixed time of an appointed day.

لَنَجْمَعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتٍ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ^{٤٠}

52. 'Then, O ye that have gone astray and have rejected *the truth*,

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمَكِيدُونَ^{٤١}

^a77 : 32 ^b17 : 50; 23 : 83; 37 : 17; 56 : 48. ^c37 : 18.

4116. Important Words :

(black smoke) is derived from *حم*. They say *حم الشحمة* i.e., he melted the fat. *يحموم* means, smoke or black smoke or intensely black smoke; a black mountain; the canopy that is extended over the inmates of Hell (Lane & Aqrab).

4117. Commentary :

The disbelievers fed fat on the hard-earned money of others, and in the pride and conceit of their wealth, prestige, and influence, arrogantly spurned the Divine Message. This and the next verse show that the root cause of all sins

is inordinate desire for wealth and the comforts and pleasures of life which prompts one to exploit other people and to deny accountability for one's actions in after-life. For *مترفين* see 23 : 65 and 17 : 17.

4118. Commentary :

Denial of the Resurrection and after-life whether by word of mouth or conduct is at the root of all sin and crime in the world. This is why, next to belief in the existence of God the greatest stress has been laid in the Qur'an on life after death. There can be no real and effective check on sin, or incentive to good works, without a true and real belief in life after death.

53. 'You will surely eat of the tree of Zaqqūm'.⁴¹¹⁹

54. 'And will fill your bellies there-with'.⁴¹²⁰

55. 'And will drink thereon of boiling water',

56. 'Drinking like the drinking of the camels that suffer from insatiable thirst'.⁴¹²¹

57. This will be their entertainment on the Day of Judgment.⁴¹²²

58. We have created you, Why, then, do you not accept *the truth*?⁴¹²³

لَا يَكُونُ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

فَمَلَأُوْنَ مِنْهَا بُطُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَشَرِبُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

فَشَرِبُوْنَ شُرْبَ الْهَيْمِ ﴿٥٦﴾

هَذَا نُزْلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٥٧﴾

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تَصَدَّقُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

^a37 : 63; 44 : 44-45.

^b37 : 67.

^c37 : 68.

4119. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that disbelievers indulged in all sorts of iniquitous activities; they, as it were, drained life to the dregs. Therefore, as a punishment, their bellies will be filled with fire and they will drink of the hot water which instead of quenching will increase their thirst.

4120. Important Words :

الْهَيْم (thirsty camels) is the plural of الْهَيْم which is derived from هَام which means, he went at random, not knowing where he was going, he became thirsty. الْهَيْم means, (a) severe thirst; (b) dropsy; or a kind of disease from which camels suffer from insatiable thirst; (c) insanity caused by extreme love. رَجُلٌ هَيْمَانٌ means, a thirsty man. رَجُلٌ هَائِمٌ means, a confused and perplexed man. الْهَيْم means, thirsty camels, sandy plains which suck all water (Aqrah).

4121. Commentary :

This and the preceding three verses describe the punishment that will be meted out to the guilty in the after-life, in a language which befits the enormity of their sins or crimes in the present life. They devoured what other people had earned with the sweat of their brows. They suffered from an insatiable lust for wealth, amassing it by fair means or foul, and being proud of their riches rejected the Divine Message. As punishment for their sins, they will be given the tree of Zaqqūm to eat, which will burn their inside, and they will have scalding water to quench their thirst, and like diseased camels their thirst will remain unsatisfied.

4122. Commentary :

نُزْلُهُمْ (their entertainment) means, their provision and food. The expression seems to have been used ironically.

4123. Commentary :

With this verse begins a series of arguments in support of life after death. The first

59. What think ye of the sperm-drop that you emit?^a

60. Is it you who have created it or are We the Creator?^b

61. We have ordained death for all of you; and We cannot be forestalled.^{c4124}

62. From bringing in your place others like you,^d and from developing you into a form which at present you know not.⁴¹²⁵

63. And you have certainly known the first creation. Why, then, do you not reflect?⁴¹²⁶

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تُمْنُونَ^{٥٩}

ءَأَنْتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْخَالِقُونَ^{٦٠}

نَحْنُ قَدْ رَتَبْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُسْبِقِينَ^{٦١}

عَلَى أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِي مَا

لَا تَعْلَمُونَ^{٦٢}

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ^{٦٣}

^a75 : 38.

^b52 : 36.

^c71 : 5.

^d76 : 29.

argument in the present verse is taken from the very subtle and wonderful phenomenon of man's birth, starting with a drop of semen and developing into a full-fledged human being,—the crown of all creation—having been equipped with all moral and spiritual powers in order that he might assimilate and demonstrate in himself Divine attributes.

4124. Commentary :

The end of all physical life is death. This is the eternal law of God from which there is no escape. Death frees the human soul from the fetters and shackles of its physical habitat and enables it to start its journey on the road to spiritual development which knows no end.

4125. Commentary :

The disintegration of man's physical tabernacle does not mean the end of his life. Death is only a change of state or form. After its flight from the body the human soul is given another body, which, then, grows and develops and takes forms which

it is not possible for man to conceive. The verse may also imply a warning to disbelievers that they should not remain lulled into a false state of complacency that they would continue to enjoy power, prestige and prosperity. The time was fast approaching when all their power would be broken and their glory would depart and another people—the Muslims—would take their place, and they could not conceive of this great change in their present prosperous condition. The fulfilment of this prophecy will constitute an argument in support of life after death.

4126. Commentary :

The verse reinforces the argument begun in the above-mentioned verses. It, in effect, says to disbelievers that they know that God created man from a mere sperm-drop and endowed him with wonderful powers and attributes to grow and develop, and yet they dare deny that the Great Creator could give him life again after his death. Does not this fact merit their reflection?

64. Do you see what you sow?⁴¹²⁷ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ^{١٣}
65. Is it you who grow it or are We the Grower? ءَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ^{١٤}
66. If We so pleased, We could reduce it all to broken pieces,^a then you would keep lamenting.⁴¹²⁸ لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ^{١٥}
67. 'We are ruined.' إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ^{١٦}
68. 'Nay, we are deprived of everything.' بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ^{١٧}
69. Do you see the water which you drink? أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ^{١٨}
70. Is it you who send it down from the clouds, or are We the Sender? ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْزِلُونَ^{١٩}
71. If We so pleased, We could make it bitter. Why, then, are you not grateful?⁴¹³⁰ لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ أَمْحًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ^{٢٠}

^a57 : 21.

4127. Commentary :

After referring to the birth of man from very insignificant beginning, the *Sūra*, from the present verse, proceeds to give a brief account of things upon which man's life on earth depends, which in fact, is a preparation for the eternal and everlasting life after death. There are three principal things upon which man's life in this world depends—food, water and fire. The first thing is food to which this verse refers.

4128. Important Words :

تفكّهون (you would keep lamenting) is derived from فكّه which means, he was or became cheerful, happy or free from straitness; jocose or was given to jesting and to laughing. تفكّه منه means, he wondered at it; he repented, grieved, lamented or regretted (Lane & Aqrab).

حطام (broken pieces) is derived from حطمه. They say حطمه i.e., he broke it into pieces, he crushed it. حطام means, what is broken in pieces of dry things; fragments of eggs. حطام الدنيا means, the perishable goods of this world (Lane & Aqrab).

4129. Commentary :

Next to food, water is the most important thing upon which human life depends for its sustenance.

4130. Commentary :

The sun makes the saltish and bitter water of oceans rise in the form of vapours which being buffeted by cold winds are turned into a cloud, and then fall as rain upon the dry and parched fields, and the seed which had lain buried deep in the ground sprouts and the sun causes

72. Do you see the fire which you kindle^a 4131

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِي تُورُونَ^ط ٤١

73. Is it you who produce the tree for it, or are We the Producer?

أَمْ أَنْتُمْ أَنْشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَا أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْشِئُونَ ٤٢

74. We have made it a reminder and benefit for the wayfarers.⁴¹³²

نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَمَتَاعًا لِلْمُقْوِينَ^ع ٤٣

75. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great^b.

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ^{هـ} ٤٤

R. 3 76. Nay, I swear by the shooting of the stars—⁴¹³³

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَوْقِعِ النُّجُومِ^و ٤٥

^a36 : 81. ^b69 : 53 ; 87 : 2.

it to grow into a smiling, flourishing crop. Who created the seas, the oceans, the wind and the warmth? It is all the work of the Great Creator and Sustainer, and yet ungrateful man has the hardihood to deny His beneficence; he refuses to believe that his life has a purpose to achieve, for which he will be given a new life after he has departed from this world.

became extremely hungry. أقوى means, he alighted at a desolate place. اقات الدار means, the house became empty of dwellers. أقوى القوم means, the provisions of the people were exhausted. القواء means, waste, barren land, ruin; hunger. مقوين means, needy and hungry people; wayfarers of a desert or those who alight at a desolate place. بات القواء او القوى means, he spent the night hungry or in a desert (Aqrab).

4131. Commentary :

Fire plays a most important part in the life of man. Much of his physical comfort depends upon it. It is a thing of very great utility, also of destruction if improperly used. In this mechanistic age life is inconceivable without the use of fire. No industry, trade or travel is possible without it. Spiritually speaking, there is latent in man a spiritual fire in whose flames, if kept under control, all his evil passions and desires are consumed; it kindles in him a yearning of the soul to establish a true and real connection with its Creator.

4133. Important Words :

لا (nay) is generally used to impart emphasis to the oath, meaning that the thing which is going to be explained next is so self-evident that it does not need calling anything to bear witness to its truth. When the refutation of a certain hypothesis is intended لا is used to signify that which is said before is not correct but the right thing is that which follows.

أقسم (I swear). For the significance and philosophy of oaths see 37 : 2 ; 41 : 2 and 91 : 2.

4132. Important Words :

المقوين (wayfarers of the desert) is derived from قوى . They say قوى الرجل i.e. the man

مواقع (shooting) is the plural of موقع which is derived from وقع which means, it fell. موقع means, a place or time where and when a thing happens (Aqrab).

77. And, indeed, that is a grand oath, if you only knew—⁴¹³⁴

وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لِّوَتَّعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

78. That this is indeed a noble Qur'an^{a, 4135}

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

79. In a well-preserved Book^{b, 4136}

فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

^a85 : 2.

^b85 : 23.

النجوم (stars) is the plural of نجم which among other things means, a portion of the Qur'an (Mufradāt). See also 53 : 2.

Commentary :

In the foregoing verses it was pointed out that there lies hidden in the inmost recesses of the human heart a longing and yearning for eternity—death not being the end or goal of life—and that adequate provision has been made in nature for the preservation of man's body. The next few verses deal with his moral and spiritual development and progress. For that purpose God has been sending His Prophets and Messengers and has been revealing to them Teachings by acting upon which man could attain the object of his life, that is, continuous and eternal progress of his soul. The Qur'an is the last and most complete and perfect Divine Teaching. The verse swears by, and holds forth مواقع النجوم (portions of the Qur'an) as evidence to support and substantiate the claim that the Qur'an is eminently fitted to fulfil the grand object referred to above, as well as to establish its Divine origin. Taking مواقع النجوم as meaning, the place and time of the falling of stars, the verse signifies that it is an unfailing Divine Law that, at the time of the appearance of a great Divine Reformer or Prophet, stars fall in unusually large numbers, and that this happened in the time of the Holy Prophet. Before him it also happened in the time of Jesus, and, in our own time, when the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

announced his claim to be the Promised Reformer. النجوم may also mean those highly righteous persons among the followers of the Holy Prophet whom God favours with His special love and nearness. In this sense of the expression, the verse signifies that the treasures of Divine knowledge and mysteries that are revealed to the Divinely-favoured ones constitute an irrefutable proof of the Qur'an being God's own revealed Word.

4134. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that مواقع النجوم (shooting of the stars, or the places or times of their falling) constitutes evidence of the fact that the Qur'an is the revealed Word of God, if only the disbelievers had the intelligence to understand this simple fact.

4135. Commentary :

The word كريم meaning noble, honourable, liberal, generous, bounteous, the verse signifies that upon those who would act upon the teachings of this noble Book will be bestowed bounteous blessings of God and that they will find a place of honour among the world's great nations.

4136. Commentary :

That the Qur'an is a well-preserved and well-protected Divinely revealed Book is an open

80 Which none shall touch except who are purified.⁴¹³⁷

لَا يَسْطِئُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81. "It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds."⁴¹³⁸

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

^a20 : 5 ; 26 : 193.

challenge to the whole world which has remained unaccepted during the past fourteen centuries. No effort has been spared by its hostile critics to find fault with the purity of its text. But all efforts in this direction have led to but one inevitable—albeit unpalatable for its enemies—result that the Book which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad gave to the world fourteen hundred years back has come down to us without the change of a single vowel. The Qur'ān stands unique in this respect among all revealed Scriptures. Books other than the Qur'ān have been interpolated, mutilated and tampered with. And this was natural, because their teachings were meant for particular peoples and for limited periods of time. But the Qur'ān, being the last Divine Message for the whole of mankind, should naturally have been vouchsafed full, complete and eternal protection. Elsewhere, the Qur'ān has made the firm assertion that it enjoys Divine protection: "Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian" (15: 10). The verse under comment along with 15 : 10 constitutes not only a forceful challenge but also a mighty prophecy that the Quranic text shall remain intact, which prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled. What adds weight and force to the prophecy is the fact that it was made at a time when even the art of writing had not much developed and that it was addressed to a people who did not even know how to read and write. "There is probably in the world no other book", says William Muir, "which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text...There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that

we possess the text which Muḥammad himself gave forth and used...To compare their pure text with the various readings of our Scriptures, is to compare things between which there is no analogy."

"Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Qur'ān have failed" (Enc. Brit).

The verse may also signify that the ideals and principles embodied in the Qur'ān are inscribed in the book of nature *i.e.*, they are in complete harmony with natural laws. Like the laws of nature they are immutable and unalterable and cannot be defied with impunity. Or it may mean that the Qur'ān is preserved in "the nature which God has bestowed upon man" (30 : 31). Human nature is based upon fundamental truths and has been endowed with the faculty to arrive at true judgments. A person who honestly calls human nature into action can easily recognize the truth of the Qur'ān.

4137. Commentary :

The verse signifies that only those lucky ones who by leading righteous lives will have achieved purity of the heart will be granted true understanding of, and insight into, the meanings of the Qur'ān, and they will be initiated into those spiritual mysteries of Divine knowledge to which the impure of heart are denied access. Incidentally, one should not touch or read the Qur'ān while one is not physically clean.

4138. Commentary :

The fact that the Qur'ān is a "well-preserved Book" and that "none shall touch it except who

82. Is it this *Divine* discourse that you would reject^a?⁴¹³⁹

83. And do you make the denial thereof your livelihood?⁴¹⁴⁰

84. Why, then, when *the soul of the dying man* reaches the throat,⁴¹⁴¹

85. And you are at that moment looking on—⁴¹⁴²

86. ^bAnd We are nearer to him than you, but you see not—

87. Why, then, if you are not to be called to account,⁴¹⁴³

أَفِيْهِذَا الْحَدِيْثِ اَنْتُمْ مُّدْهِنُوْنَ ۝۸۲

وَتَجْعَلُوْنَ رِزْقَكُمْ اَنْتُمْ تَكْذِبُوْنَ ۝۸۳

فَلَوْلَا اِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُوْمَ ۝۸۴

وَ اَنْتُمْ حِيْنَئِذٍ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ۝۸۵

وَنَحْنُ اَقْرَبُ اِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ لَا تَبْصُرُوْنَ ۝۸۶

فَلَوْلَا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِيْنِيْنَ ۝۸۷

^a17 : 74 ; 68 : 10.

^b50 : 17.

are purified” constitutes a proof and a guarantee that “it is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.”

4139. Commentary :

The verse seems to administer a subtle rebuke to disbelievers that they are so inconsiderate that they reject a Book *i.e.*, the Qur’ān, which possesses such excellences and beauties as are mentioned in the preceding verses.

4140. Commentary :

The rebuke administered to disbelievers in the preceding verse has been continued here. They are told that they have become so degenerate that they do not accept the truth because they are afraid that by doing so they would be deprived of their means of livelihood. So it is for the sake of filthy lucre that they reject the Divine Message. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers have made rejection of truth something on which, as it were, their very lives depend. They will not accept it at any cost.

4141. Commentary :

The rebuke implied in the preceding two verses is continued. The disbelievers are told that they deny truth because they seem to think that they will never die and will not be called to account for their denial. This and the next few verses contain a graphic picture of the moments when the soul departs from the body at death.

4142. Commentary :

This and the next verse constitute two parenthetical clauses.

4143. Important Words :

مَدِيْنِيْنَ (called to account) is derived from دَانَ which means, he obeyed; he was or became abased and submissive. دَانَهُ means, he made him do what he disliked; he abased or enslaved him; he ruled, governed, managed him or it; he had authority over him or it; he called him to account (Lane & Aqrab).

88. You cannot bring it back, if you are truthful?

89. Now if he be of those who have attained nearness to God,

90. Then *for him* is comfort and fragrance of happiness and a Garden of Bliss;

91. And if he be of those who are on the right hand,

92. Then 'Peace be on thee, *who is* from those on the right hand.'

93. But if he be of those who reject the truth and are in error,

94. Then *for him* will be an entertainment of boiling water.

95. And burning in Hell.

96. Verily, this is the certain truth^{a4144}

97. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great^{b4145}.

تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝٨٨

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ۝٨٩

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ ۖ وَجَنَّتْ نَعِيمٌ ۝٩٠

وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ۝٩١

فَسَلَامٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ۝٩٢

وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ الضَّالِّينَ ۝٩٣

فَنُزُلٌ مِنْ حَيْمٍ ۝٩٤

وَتَصْلِيَةٌ جَهِيمٍ ۝٩٥

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ۝٩٦

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ۝٩٧

^a13 : 10 ; 22 : 55 ; 35 : 32 . ^bSee 56 : 76.

4144. Commentary :

There are three degrees of certainty, viz. *حق اليقين* and *عين اليقين* and *علم اليقين*. Of these the first degree of certainty is knowledge of a thing acquired inferentially as we conclude the existence of fire from the presence of smoke in a place without witnessing the fire itself. (*علم اليقين*) But if we see the fire itself, our knowledge of the existence of fire becomes certainty of the second degree (*عين اليقين*). Knowledge of a thing we witness with the eye may, however, be further improved through actual experience ; for instance by thrusting our hand into the fire. This is the highest stage of certainty which in the language of the Qur'ān is called

حق اليقين. The verse means that life after death is certainty of the highest degree. The *Sūra* had opened with the subject of the Resurrection and life after death and has closed on the same subject. This is a special peculiarity of the Quranic style that when a certain *Sūra* begins with the discussion of a particular subject, after dealing exhaustively with it, it ends by briefly referring to the same subject.

4145. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a suitable ending to the *Sūra*. The main topic of the *Sūra* was the provision which God has made in the form of food, water and fire for the sustenance of

physical life. The description of these manifold and multifarious Divine blessings ended with an exhortation to man to glorify the name of his Lord Who has created all these things for his use (v. 75). But life on earth is not the aim and object of man's creation. It is only a prelude to, and a preparation for, a much higher and nobler life without end. For the achievement of the object of that life, God raised His Messengers and sent down Revelation, so that man should make preparation for the day of his death. In after-life man shall have to render an account of his deeds. So, for this great favour he should glorify the name of his Lord, the Great. With this exhortation and reminder the *Sūra* comes to a close.

CHAPTER 57

AL-HADĪD

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the first of the last ten Medinite *Sūrās* of the Qur'ān which end with Chapter 66. It seems to have been revealed after the conquest of Mecca or the Treaty of Hudaibiya, as is clear from the mention of الفتح (the victory) in v. 11 which refers to the Fall of Mecca or, according to some, more appropriately to the Treaty of Hudaibiya. The series of the Meccan *Sūrās* which began with *Sūra* Al-Saba' and which, with the exception of the three intervening Medinite Chapters *i.e.*, Muḥammad, Al-Faṭḥ and Al-Ḥujurāt, had continued without interruption, ended with the preceding Chapter. This series completes the subject matter of the Meccan *Sūrās*. With the present *Sūra*, however, begins a new series of Medinite Chapters which end with *Sūra* Al-Taḥrīm. The *Sūra* takes its title from the word الحديد (the iron) occurring in v. 26.

In the preceding *Sūra* (v. 79) it was stated that the Qur'ān is كتاب مكنون (well-preserved Book), which among other things signifies that the teachings of the Qur'ān are in perfect harmony with natural laws and with the dictates and demands of human nature, reason and common-sense. The present *Sūra* opens with the Divine attributes: the Mighty, the Wise. And quite naturally, the Being Who is Wise and Mighty must have revealed a Book whose teachings are consistent with the laws of nature and with human reason and conscience. And, befittingly the *Sūra* opens with the words "Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allah," and this is because the preceding *Sūra* had ended on the Divine command, *viz.*, "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great." It is significant that five, out of these ten Medinite *Sūrās*, open with the words, "Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth declares the glory of Allah, the Mighty, the Wise."

Subject Matter

In the previous seven Meccan *Sūrās*, especially in the three immediately preceding — Al-Qamar, Al-Raḥmān, and Al-Wāqiah—it was repeatedly declared, in forceful though metaphorical language, that a great reformation, a veritable resurrection, was about to be brought about by the Holy Prophet among a people who for long centuries had grovelled in dust and dirt; and who because they had no living relation with civilized society, were looked down upon as pariahs among the comity of great nations. The present *Sūra* points out that the great day of the phenomenal progress and power of that pariah nation—the Arabs—has already dawned and that the eventual victory of truth over falsehood is in sight. The *Sūra* opens with a declaration of the power, might and knowledge of God, the Revealer of the Qur'ān. "His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth (v. 2)," says the *Sūra*, "and it is He who causes the light

of truth to penetrate the darkness of falsehood and the darkness of falsehood to disappear" (v.7), hinting thereby that the hour of the victory of Islam had approached near. But there were essential conditions to be fulfilled before that consummation could take place *i.e.* there must be on the part of Muslims a firm and invincible faith in the truth of Islamic ideals and a preparedness to make necessary sacrifice of life and property for the furtherance of the cause of Truth. This is how, the *Sūra* proceeds to say, God gives life to earth after it is dead (v. 18), *i.e.*, He raises a people morally corrupt and politically unsettled to spiritual eminence and material power and greatness. The believers, however, are warned that after they have acquired power and prosperity they should not neglect moral ideals and should not indulge in the pursuit of transitory material pleasures because that would lead them to a life of sin and vice.

The *Sūra* continues the theme namely, that from time immemorial God's Messengers have been appearing in the world to lead men to the goal of their lives and that God has created "iron" (v. 26) which of all metals is perhaps of greater utility for mankind and which causes great violence and destruction. Next, the *Sūra* very briefly traces back the account of Divine revelation to the time of Noah and the Prophets of Israel and closes by warning Muslims that God's pleasure is not to be sought by leading a life of renunciation or flight from the world, as Jesus's followers had mistakenly thought and practised, but by making proper use of powers and faculties bestowed by God on man, and of the things God has created for his benefit.

سُورَةُ الْحَدِيدِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٥٦﴾

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

2. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah;^b and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴¹⁴⁶

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ

الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b17 : 45; 24 : 42; 61 : 2; 62 : 2; 64 : 2.

4146. Important Words :

سبح (glorifies) is derived from سباح (sabaha). They say سبح في الماء i.e., he swam in the water. سبح في الأرض means, he went or travelled far in the land. سبح في حوائجه means, he occupied himself in the accomplishment of his needs. سبح الرجل means, the man busied himself in earning his subsistence or in his affairs. سبح (sabahun) thus would signify doing one's task or doing it with utmost effort and quickly, and سبحان الله denotes quickness in betaking oneself to God and agility in serving or obeying Him and therefore may be rendered, "I betake myself quickly to the service of God and am prompt in obeying Him." In view of the root meaning of this word, the inf. noun تسبيح would mean, declaring God to be far removed from every imperfection, defect and impurity, or betaking oneself quickly to God's service and to be prompt in obeying Him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that everything in the universe is doing its allotted task punctually and regularly, and by making use of the attributes

and powers bestowed upon it by God is fulfilling the object of its creation in such a wonderful manner that one is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the Designer and Architect of the universe is indeed Mighty, and Wise, and that the whole universe collectively, and every created thing individually and in its own limited sphere, bears testimony to the undeniable fact that God's handiwork is absolutely free from flaw, defect or imperfection in all its multifarious and multitudinous aspects. This is the meaning and significance of تسبيح. In fact, the perfection of a work presupposes two things: (a) that its doer possesses all the necessary means for accomplishing it and (b) that he possesses complete and perfect knowledge about it. God is Mighty and Wise, says the verse, i.e., His handiwork being flawless demonstrates His wisdom and might.

The verse may also signify that by the revelation of the Qur'ān such a great change will come over Arabia that this land, reeking with superstition, ignorance and idol-worship, will reverberate with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise Creator and Master of the universe.

3. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth; He gives life and He causes death,^a and He has power over all things.⁴¹⁴⁷

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ^٣

4. He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden, and He knows all things full well.⁴¹⁴⁸

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ^٤

5. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods,^b then He settled Himself on the Throne. He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it,^c and what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do.⁴¹⁴⁹

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ
أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُعَلِّمُ مَا يَلِجُ
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ
مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ^٥

^a3 : 157 ; 7 : 159 ; 44 : 9.

^b7 : 55; 11 : 8; 25 : 60; 32 : 5. ^c34 : 3.

4147. Commentary :

This verse explains the Divine attributes “Mighty” and “Wise” mentioned in the preceding verse.

The words “He gives life and He causes death,” signify that the process of construction and destruction is operating every moment in every atom in the universe.

4148. Commentary :

الاول (the First) meaning that there was nothing before God, signifies that He created everything and He is the First Cause of all things. الآخر (the Last) means that there is and there will be nothing after Him, i.e., He is the Last and Final Cause of all things or that whereas everything is subject to death and destruction, He alone will remain after all things had ceased

to exist. الظاهر (the Manifest) may signify that all things are subject to Divine laws and God has power over all things and is subordinate to no one and is subject to no laws, or that He is manifest in His works, or is more manifest than anything else, or that He comprehends everything. الباطن (the Hidden) may signify that God is the Knower of all things, so that there is nothing hidden from Him, or that whereas He comprehends everything He Himself is Incomprehensible. The expression may also signify that there is nothing nearer than God or that there is no refuge besides Him.

These four Divine attributes show that God is above the limitations of space and time.

4149. Commentary :

For a detailed note on the first part of this verse see 7 : 55; 10 : 4 and 41 : 10-11, and for the

6. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth;^a and to Allah are all affairs referred for final judgment.

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ
الْأُمُورُ ﴿٦﴾

7. He causes the night to pass into the day and causes the day to pass into the night;^b and He knows full well all that is in the breasts.⁴¹⁵⁰

يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي
الَّيْلِ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾

8. Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and spend in the way of Allah out of that to which He has made you heirs. And those of you who believe and spend will have a great reward.⁴¹⁵¹

آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ
مُسْتَخْلِفِينَ فِيهِ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْفَقُوا
لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

^a2 : 108; 7 : 159; 43 : 68 ^b22 : 62; 31 : 30 ; 35 : 14.

the latter part see 34 : 3. The six periods or stages of evolution referred to in the verse may be those of the ether, nebula, electrons, minerals, plants and animals. Very briefly, the verse may signify that after God had created the heavens and the earth in six periods or stages, He began to control and govern the universe through set laws, and that as He made provision for the physical sustenance and development of man, so did He make similar provision for his spiritual evolution. But God alone knew when a particular Divine Teaching was needed for a particular people; also when to take it back to heaven, *i.e.*, to abrogate it, when it was corrupted and ceased to fulfil the spiritual needs of the people to whom it was given. And He alone knew when to reveal a new Teaching. And now that God has revealed the Qur'ān, He will be with the Muslims where-soever they may be because to them is entrusted the preaching of the last Divine Message.

4150. Commentary :

In the preceding verse it was pointed out that

now that God has chosen the Companions of the Holy Prophet for the bestowal of His special favours and has entrusted to them the preaching of the Quranic Message, He will give them power and predominance in the world because His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. The present verse, continuing the theme, purports to say that the night of decline and degradation that had enveloped Arabia is about to pass away and the day of its ascendance and progress is about to dawn.

4151. Commentary :

In the preceding verse Muslims were promised power, prestige and prosperity. In the present verse they are told that they will have to fulfil certain conditions to establish their title to the great favours promised to them. They must have firm faith in the truth of the Message the preaching of which is entrusted to them and must be prepared to "spend in the way of Allah out of that to which He has made you heirs."

9. Why is it that you believe not in Allah, while the Messenger calls you to believe in your Lord, and He has already taken a covenant from you, if indeed you are believers?⁴¹⁵²

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ يَدْعُوكُمْ
لِأُتُومِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِيثَاقَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ ⑨

10. He it is Who sends down clear Signs to His servant,^a that He may bring you out of *every kind of* darkness into the light.^b And verily, Allah is Compassionate and Merciful to you.

هُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَكُم
مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ⑩

11. And why is it that you spend not in the way of Allah, while to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? Those of you who spent and fought before the Victory are not equal to those who did so later. They are greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards^c. And to all has Allah promised good. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁵³

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ أَنْفَقَ
مِن قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتْلٍ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ
الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَقَتْلُوا وَكَلَّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ
الْحُسْنَ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ⑪

^a22 : 17 ; 24 : 35; 58 : 6. ^b14 : 6 ; 33 : 44; 65 : 12. ^c4 : 96; 9 : 20.

4152. Commentary :

The expression مَا لَكُمْ besides the meaning given in the text may also signify : "There is no earthly reason that....."

"The covenant" spoken of in the verse signifies the faith-in-God implanted in the nature of man, and the longing to get near to Him.

4153. Commentary :

Man will have to leave behind in this world

all his material possessions which in truth belong to God.

الْفَتْحِ (the Victory) may refer to the Fall of Mecca, soon after which the whole of Arabia submitted to the Holy Prophet, or it may refer to the Treaty of Hudaibiya which laid the foundation of the subsequent rapid spread of Islam and of the vast and very quick expansion of the political power of Muslims.

- R. 2 12. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan?^a So He will increase it manifold for him, and he will have a generous reward.⁴¹⁵⁴

13. And *think of* the day when thou wilt see the believing men and the believing women, their light running before them and on their right hands,^b and it will be said to them, 'Glad tidings for you this day!—Gardens through which streams flow, wherein you will abide. That is the supreme triumph.'⁴¹⁵⁵

14. On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe, 'Wait a while for us that we may borrow from your light,' it will be said to them, 'Go back if you can, and seek for light.' Then there will be set up between them a wall with a door in it. The inside of it, will be *all* mercy and outside of it, in front, will be torment.⁴¹⁵⁶

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضِعَّهُ
لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ ١٢

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ
جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ١٣

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
انظُرُونَا نَقْتِسِسْ مِنْ نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا
وَسَاءَ لَكُمُ الْفَاتِنَةُ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا نُورًا فَضَرَبَ بَيْنَهُمْ سُورًا
لَهُ بَابٌ بِأَطْنَةِ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرَةٌ مِنْ ظِلِّهِ
الْعَذَابُ ١٤

^a2 : 246 ; 64 : 18 ; 73 : 21. ^b66 : 9.

4154. Commentary :

God regards monetary sacrifices, demanded of Muslims for their own progress and advancement, as a loan lent to Him which He promises to increase and return manifold. The sacrifices rendered by early Muslims in the cause of Truth led to a comparatively much greater reward in the form of the conquest of the mightiest empires of the time.

4155. Commentary :

The words, "their light," mean the light of their faith and good actions which on the "day of distress and darkness" (i.e. for disbelievers) will

lead believers to their goal. Thus their faith and good works will assume the form of light on the 'Day of Resurrection.' "Light" may also mean the light of Divine realization and the capacity to seek and achieve the pleasure of God in this very life. For "Divine Light" see 6 : 123.

4156. Commentary :

It is characteristic of the Hypocrites that in time of trials and tribulations they seek to dissociate themselves from believers but in the hour of success and victory they loudly profess faith and ask for their share in the benefits of victory.

15. They will call out to them, *saying*, 'Were we not with you?' They will answer, 'Yea, but you led yourselves into temptation and you hesitated^a and doubted and your vain desires deceived you till the decree of Allah came to pass. And the Deceiver deceived you in respect of Allah.'⁴¹⁵⁷

16. 'So this day no ransom shall be accepted from you, nor from those who disbelieved.^b Your final abode is the Fire; that is your friend; and a very evil destination it is.'⁴¹⁵⁸

يُنَادُوهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ
فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ
الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ ①٥

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُوْخَذُ مِنْكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا مَا أَوْكُمْ النَّارُ هِيَ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَبِئْسَ
الْمَصِيرُ ①٦

^a4 : 142 ; 9 : 98. ^b2 : 49.

"Light," as mentioned in the preceding verse, is bestowed upon believers in consequence of their good works in this life also, and the Hypocrites are told in the present verse that the only way they could have received light in the Hereafter was by good actions in the present life; the expression وراءكم signifying the present life.

The last part of the verse may also mean that God's mercy and grace would accompany the believers wherever they go and Divine punishment would dog the footsteps of disbelievers and, try as they might, they will find no refuge from it.

"A wall" referred to in the verse might signify the wall of Islam or of the Qur'an. The disbelievers remained outside this wall and so were deprived of Divine mercy which was granted to believers; and were seized with

punishment in this life. Their having remained outside the fold of Islam will take the form of a wall in the Hereafter.

4157. **Commentary :**

أمر الله (decree of Allah) means the decree of Allah that Divine punishment will overtake the Hypocrites. The reference may be to the punishment of the Jewish tribes of Medina for their repeated defection and treachery.

4158. **Commentary :**

The words "that is your friend" seem to have been used ironically. Or the words may mean that only the fire of Hell will purify them of the impurities and dross of sins committed by disbelievers in this life and will make them fit for spiritual progress and thus will be a "friend" to them.

17. Has not the time arrived for those who believe that their hearts should feel humbled at the remembrance of Allah and at the truth which has come down *to them*, and that they should not become like those who were given the Book before them, but because *the period of the descent of Allah's grace upon them* was prolonged for them,^a their hearts became hardened,^b and many of them are wicked?⁴¹⁵⁹

18. Know that Allah is *now* quickening the earth after its death.^c We have made the Signs manifest to you, that you may understand.⁴¹⁶⁰

19. *As to* the men who give alms, and the women who give alms, and those who lend to Allah a goodly loan^d—it will be increased manifold for them, and theirs will be a noble reward—⁴¹⁶¹

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ①٤

إِذْ عَلِمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ①٥

إِنَّ الْمَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُصَدِّقَاتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضْعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ ①٦

^a21 : 45. ^b2 : 75; 6 : 44. ^c22 : 7; 35 : 10. ^d2 : 246 ; 30 : 40.

4159: Commentary :

The verse seems to refer to the Latter-Day Muslims when as a result of neglecting the teachings of Islam they will have become spiritually corrupt, morally depraved and politically impotent. The verse means to bring home to them the realization of their all-round degradation and makes to them a pathetic appeal. "Has not the time arrived yet," it seems to say to them, "now that they have sunk to the lowest depths of degradation, they should turn to God and act upon the teachings of their religion which once raised them to the highest peaks of greatness, grandeur and glory."

4160. Commentary :

In the preceding verse Muslims were told that a time would come when, as the result of

ignoring and neglecting the teachings of their religion, their hearts would become hardened and they would turn away from God and incur His displeasure and consequently would become degraded and disgraced. But God would not leave them in the lurch. In conformity with His time-honoured law, viz., that when the earth becomes dry, He sends down rain from heavens and gives a new life to it, He will raise among them a great Divine Reformer and through him will bring about the renaissance of Islam, and Muslims will again see better days.

4161. Commentary :

After the appearance of a great Divine Reformer among them, as promised in the preceding verse, the Muslims will be called upon to make great sacrifices, especially in money

20. And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers *and* they are the Truthful and the Witnesses in the sight of their Lord, they will have their reward and their light. But *as for* those ^awho disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these are the inmates of Hell.⁴¹⁶²

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ
وَالشَّهَدَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ

الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٢٠﴾

3 21. ^bKnow that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and *a source of* boasting among yourselves, and *of* rivalry in multiplying riches and children. *This life is* like the rain, the vegetation produced whereby rejoices the tillers. Then it dries up and thou seest it turn yellow; ^cthen it becomes broken pieces of straw. And in the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and *also* forgiveness from Allah, and *His* pleasure. And the life of this world is nothing but *temporary* enjoyment of deceitful things.⁴¹⁶³

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ زِينَةٌ
وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ
كَشَلِّ غَيْثٍ آجَبٍ الْكَفَّارُ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ
فَتَرْدُهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ
عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ
وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿٢١﴾

^a2 : 40 ; 7 : 37 ; 22 : 58 ; 30 : 17 ; 64 : 11 ; 78 : 29.

^b6 : 33 ; 29 : 65 ; 47 : 37.

^c56 : 66.

and property, as at that time the teachings of Islam will need to be preached and propagated to the ends of the earth and financial help will be very much in demand.

4162. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that if Muslims believed in the great Divine Reformer, they will attain to those spiritual heights which the Truthful (الصادقون) and the Martyrs (الشهداء) attained.

4163. Important Words :

الكفار (tillers) is the plural of كافر which is act. part. from كفر. They say كفر الشيئ او كفره.

(kaffara) i.e., he concealed, hid or covered the thing. كفر نعمة الله او بنعمة الله means, he denied or disacknowledged the favour of God, he denied and concealed it. The husbandman is called كافر because he conceals the seed under earth, and a disbeliever is so called because he conceals and denies the favour of God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Life spent in forgetfulness of God and disregard of its higher values is, as described in the verse under comment, but a sport and a pastime, otherwise man's life on earth is a most serious fact. It has a great mission and a

22. "Vie with one another in seeking forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden the value whereof is equal to the value of the heaven and the earth; it has been prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of immense grace."⁴¹⁶⁴

سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٢﴾

43 : 134; 35 : 33.

noble object to fulfil. The verse implies that at the time when the great Promised Reformer to whom reference is impliedly made in the preceding verse would make his appearance, men would neglect the grim and noble purpose of their lives and would give themselves up, body and soul, to the pursuit of petty and paltry pleasures of life and there would be a mad craze and unhealthy competition among them, and vying with one another, for amassing wealth and material resources. But the end of all this competition and rivalry, says the verse, would be like the end of a blooming and blossoming crop over which a scorching wind has blown turning it into broken pieces of straw.

4164. Commentary :

عرض (value) is derived from عرض (‘ārāḍa). عرض الشيئى لفلان means, he showed, manifested, presented the thing to such a one. عرض means, breadth, width; vastness; latitude. عرضاً ذهب طولاً و عرضاً means, he went lengthwise and breadthwise. The word also means, worldly goods; price; gain; a compensation; a substitute; any goods or commodities except gold or silver; etc. (Lane).

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of عرض

given under Important Words the verse would mean that the heavens and the earth—the whole universe—would be given to believers as a reward for the good works they had done in this life, which signifies that the reward of the righteous in the after-life would be beyond measure or count. Or the Paradise comprising both the heavens and the earth may signify that the believers will live in Paradise both in this life and in the Hereafter. Moreover, the fact that Paradise as conceived by the Qur’ān is as extensive as both the heavens and the earth—the whole space—shows that it comprises Hell also. This means that Paradise and Hell are not two distinct and separate places but two conditions or states of mind. A well-known saying of the Holy Prophet gives an insight into the Quranic conception of Paradise and Hell. Once on being asked by some of his Companions: “If Paradise comprises in its vastness heavens and earth, where is Hell,” the Holy Prophet is reported to have replied, أين الليل إذا جاء, i.e., where is the night when the day comes (Ibn Kathīr). Besides, the substitution of the words مغفرة من ربكم وجنة in the verse under comment for مغفرة من الله ورضوان in the preceding verse shows that Paradise (جنة) in fact means the pleasure of God (رضوان). What a beautiful conception of Paradise !

23. There befalls not any calamity either in the earth or in your *own* persons, but it is *recorded* in a Book before We bring it into being—surely, that is easy for Allah—⁴¹⁶⁵

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ
إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى
اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

24. "That you may not grieve over what is lost to you nor exult because of that which He has given to you. And Allah loves not any self-conceited boaster,

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

25. ^bSuch as are niggardly and *also* enjoin upon men to be niggardly. And whoso turns his back, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

الَّذِينَ يَجْعَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَمَنْ
يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٣٩﴾

26. Verily, We sent Our Messengers with manifest Signs^c and sent down with them the Book and the Balance^d that people may act with justice; and We sent down iron, wherein is *material* for violent warfare and *many* benefits for mankind, and that Allah may distinguish those who help Him and His Messengers without having seen Him. Surely, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.⁴¹⁶⁶

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا
الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ

اللَّهُ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

^a3 : 154.

^b4 : 38.

^c7 : 102; 14 : 10; 35 : 26.

^d42 : 18; 55 : 8.

4165. Commentary :

كتاب (Book) may signify Divine Law or knowledge. It may also signify the Qur'an. According to the first meaning, the verse would signify that everything is subject to a certain law of nature. According to the second it may mean that the causes and cures of misery befalling nations and individuals have been mentioned in the Qur'an, the words *في الارض* signifying people in general, and *في أنفسكم*

meaning the Muslims as a whole or every individual.

4166. Commentary :

الكتاب signifies the eternal Divine Laws. *الميزان* has different senses with different scholars. Some of these are: (a) Principles of equity which people are enjoined to observe in their dealings with others. (b) Standards by which

- R. 4 27. And We did send Noah and Abraham, and We placed among their seed prophethood and the Book." So some of them followed the guidance, but many of them were rebellious ⁴¹⁶⁷

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي
ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النَّبُوَّةَ وَالكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُمْ مُهْتَدٍ وَ
كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

429 : 28; 5 : 47.

human actions are measured, weighed, appraised and judged. (c) Balance which pervades the whole universe maintaining just equilibrium between all things. (d) Practice or example of the Holy Prophet and right use of the Book of God. (e) The capacity for leadership by means of which the Holy Prophet, in conformity with the Book of Allah, established a system of justice between the State, the Society and the individual. (f) Following the golden means and avoiding extremes in the discharge of one's obligations towards God and men. (g) Reasons and arguments based on observation and experience. See also 42 : 18 and 55 : 10.

الحديد (iron) is the metal which has perhaps played the greatest and most useful part in the growth and development of human civilization. It may also signify the power to compel obedience to the laws upon which the whole existence of human society depends.

Thus the verse means that God has sent down three things, viz., (a) Divine Laws; (b) the system

which maintains just equilibrium in human social relations and (c) the power to compel obedience to Divine Laws.

4167. Commentary :

In the preceding verse it was mentioned that in order to make men lead useful and righteous lives and realize the object for which God has brought this universe into existence, He sent His Messengers and revealed to them guidance from Himself and supported the claims of Divine Messengers with clear and sound arguments; and He also sent down iron which is of immense value and utility to mankind. The present verse gives the names of some of those Divine Messengers. Noah is probably the first Law-bearing Prophet and Abraham the progenitor of the three great peoples—Jews, Christians and Muslims. After these two Prophets, the system of prophethood continued till it found its final exponent in the Mosaic Dispensation in the person of Jesus to whom the next verse makes a pointed reference.

28. Then We "caused Our Messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow *them*, and we gave him the Gospel. ^bAnd We created in the hearts of those who accepted him compassion and mercy. But monasticism which they invented for themselves—we did not prescribe it for them—for the seeking of Allah's pleasure; but they did not observe it with due observance. Yet We gave those of them who believed their *due* reward, but many of them are rebellious.⁴¹⁶⁸

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى
ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي
قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ وَرَهَابِيَّةً
إِيتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ
رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَن رَّعَاهَا حَقًّا رِعَايَتَهَا فَآتَيْنَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
فُسِقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

^{a2} : 88; 5 : 47. ^{b5} : 83.

4168. **Commentary :**

The verse may mean that the followers of Jesus invented monasticism in order to seek Allah's pleasure but Allah had not prescribed it for them; or they invented monasticism which God had not prescribed for them—He had only prescribed for them the seeking of His pleasure.

In v. 26, it was stated that God had sent down الميزان (Balance) in order that people may act with equity and justice, i.e., by avoiding extremes they should adopt the golden mean or the middle course in all their affairs and actions because that was the best and the safest course. In the present verse the example of a people—the Christians—has been cited to show that the adoption of an extreme course by them, with howsoever good intentions, led them away from the goal they had sought to attain. They invented the institution of monkery in order, as they thought, to seek the pleasure of God, and in conformity with, according to them, Jesus's own teaching and practice. The adage that the road to heaven is paved

with good intentions was never better illustrated than in the case of Christians for whom monkery proved a source of many evils. They started with monasticism and ended with giving themselves up to the worship of Mammon. By implication the Muslims were told that because a great Prophet had been raised for them, by following whom they would be given great worldly power and wealth, they should not go to the other extreme and give themselves up to the pursuit of material gains and physical pleasures. While monasticism has been decried and deplored as repugnant to human nature, the Holy Prophet also is reported to have said: لا رهبانية في الاسلام i.e., there is no monasticism in Islam (Ibn Athīr). Islam is not a religion for dreamers and visionaries who live in a world of their own conception, entirely divorced from the hard realities of life, but it is a practical system which gives effective and full guidance in mundane as well as spiritual affairs. It has not left any aspect of crowded human life for which it has not laid down practical guidance. There is no place in

29. O ye who believe! fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and will provide for you a light wherein you will walk, and will grant you forgiveness—and verily Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful—⁴¹⁶⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ
يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ
نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَحِيمٌ

30. That the People of the Book may not think that they (the Muslims) have no power to attain aught of the grace of Allah;^a whereas grace is *entirely* in the hands of Allah.^b He gives it to whomsoever He pleases. And Allah is the Master of immense grace.⁴¹⁷⁰

لَّئَلَّا يَعْلَمَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا يَفْقَهُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ
مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ^c

^a2 : 106. ^b2 : 106; 3 : 74.

Islam for such an impracticable teaching as “take no thought for the morrow” (Matt. 6 : 34). It emphatically enjoins a Muslim “to look to what he sends forth for the morrow” (59 : 19). According to Islam a true Muslim is one who discharges fully and completely the obligations he owes to his fellow-beings (حقوق العباد) as he discharges those he owes to his Creator (حقوق الله).

4169. Commentary :

As in the preceding verse the Christians were admonished for regarding a life of renunciation and flight from the world as an ideal, the Muslims in the present verse are told to devote as much care and attention to their mundane as to their spiritual affairs and to discharge the obli-

gations they owe to their Creator and Lord with as much devotion as their obligations to their fellow-beings, and that if they did so they would be granted the benefits and blessings of this life as well as those of the Hereafter. Elsewhere in the Qur’ān Muslims have been enjoined constantly to pray: “Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come” (2 : 202).

4170. Commentary :

In the preceding verse the Muslims were promised both spiritual and material benefits and blessings in order to let People of the Book disabuse their minds of the false notion that Divine Grace was their monopoly and also to remind them that now God had transferred it to another people—the followers of Islam.

CHAPTER 58

SŪRA AL-MUJĀDILAH

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūra* takes its title from the word تَجَادَلَ occurring in its opening verse. It is the second of the last seven Medinite Chapters of the Qur'ān and appears to have been revealed sometime before *Sūra* Al-Aḥzāb (Chapter 33), in which only a cursory reference was made to the evil custom of *Zihār*, i.e., calling one's wife one's "mother." This subject has been dealt with in some detail in the present *Sūra*. Khaulah, wife of Aus bin Ṣāmit, complained to the Holy Prophet that her husband had called her "mother," which rendered her a "suspended" woman, neither divorced nor enjoying the status of a wife. The Holy Prophet pleaded his inability to do anything to help her in the absence of a revealed ordinance. This somewhat detailed reference to *Zihār* in this *Sūra* shows that it was revealed before *Sūra* Al-Aḥzāb. But as *Sūra* Al-Aḥzāb was revealed between 5th and 7th year of the Hijra, the present *Sūra* therefore must have been revealed earlier, very likely between the 3rd and the 4th year.

Moreover, in the immediately preceding *Sūra*—Al-Ḥadīd—the "People of the Book" were sternly told that Divine grace was not their monopoly and since they had repeatedly defied and had opposed and persecuted God's Messengers, God's favour would be transferred for all time to come to the House of Ishmael, and so Muslims are warned in the *Sūra* under comment that their material prosperity would excite the enmity of their external and internal foes. They should, therefore, be on their guard against their machinations. And, it is an invariable practice of the Qur'ān that whenever it deals with the enemies of Islam, it also makes a pointed reference to some social evil which may be regarded as the enemy of Islamic social system. This method was adopted in *Sūras* Nūr and Aḥzāb and it has been adopted in the present *Sūra* also.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with a sharp disapproval of the evil custom of *Zihār* and by citing the case of Khaula lays down the ordinance that if anyone calls his wife "mother" he has to atone for this heinous moral lapse by either freeing a slave, if he has one, or by fasting for two successive months, or by feeding sixty needy persons. The punishment is commensurate with the offence as the evil practice is tantamount to "opposing God and His Messenger". After dealing a death blow to the custom of *Zihār*, the *Sūra* proceeds to deal with the plots and conspiracies of the internal enemies of Islam and condemns the formation of secret societies and holding secret conferences to injure the cause of Truth. Then with befitting relevance the *Sūra* lays down some rules of conduct about social gatherings. Towards its close, the *Sūra*

gives a warning to the enemies of Truth that by their opposition they are incurring God's wrath and that they shall not be able to arrest or impede the progress of Islam because it is a Divine decree that it shall prevail. The warning to disbelievers that their opposition to Truth will not go unpunished is followed by an equally strong warning to believers, that under no circumstances should they make friends with the enemies of Islam, however nearly related the latter might be to them, as by opposing the Faith they have waged a veritable war against God, and friendship with God's enemies is inconsistent with true faith.

سُورَةُ الْمُجَادِلَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٥٨)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴¹⁷¹

2. Allah has indeed heard the speech of her who pleads with thee concerning her husband, and complains unto Allah. And Allah has heard your dialogue. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.⁴¹⁷²

3. ^bThose among you who seek to put away their wives by calling them mothers—they do not thereby become their mothers; their mothers are only those who gave them birth; and they certainly utter words that are manifestly evil and untrue; but surely Allah is the Effacer of sins, Most Forgiving.⁴¹⁷³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ②

الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَسَاءَلُهُمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِلَّا الْإِنْسَانُ وَلَكِنْ نُهُمْ وَ إِنْهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ ③

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b33 : 5.

4171. **Commentary :** See 1 : 1.

4172. **Commentary :**

The reference in the verse seems to be to Khaulah, wife of Aus bin Šāmit and daughter of Tha'labah. She had become separated from her husband because the latter had called her "mother," the exact words used by him being, "thou art to me as the back of my mother." According to an old Arab custom all conjugal relations ceased between a man and his wife when he would use these words about her. The unfortunate woman could neither demand divorce in order to contract a second marriage, nor could she enjoy conjugal rights. She remained uncared for. Khaulah came to the Holy Prophet and complained to him of the awkward situation in which she was placed,

and sought his advice and help in the matter. The Holy Prophet pleaded his inability to do anything for her, as it was his wont not to give a decision in matters of this nature, unless he was guided by revelation. The revelation came, and the custom of *Zihār* was declared unlawful.

Incidentally, the verse shows that God hears the prayers and complaints of even the weakest of His servants.

4173. **Commentary :**

Zihār or calling one's wife "mother" has been declared here a heinous sin. For a somewhat detailed note see 33 : 5.

The words لعفو غفور mean that God in His great mercy has made allowance for man's

4. *As to those who call their wives mothers, and then would go back on what they have said, the penalty for it is the freeing of a slave before they touch each other. This is what you are admonished with. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.*⁴¹⁷⁴

5. But whoso does not find a *slave*, he must fast for two successive months, before they touch each other. And whoso is not able to do so, must feed sixty poor people. *This is so prescribed that you may truly believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits prescribed by Allah; and for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.*⁴¹⁷⁵

6. "Those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will surely be abased even as those before them were abased; and We have already sent down clear Signs.^b And the disbelievers will have an humiliating punishment."⁴¹⁷⁶

وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ
لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا
ذَلِكَ تَوْعُظُونَ بِهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝
فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ
قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَإِطْعَامُ
سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا ۚ ذَلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادِّثُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ كُنْتُمْ كَمَا كُنْتُمْ
الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ
وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ۝

49 : 63. b22 : 17 ; 24 : 35 ; 57 : 10.

weaknesses and that He is always ready to forgive his lapses, provided he comes to God with a penitent heart and makes amends.

The verse has redeemed a right which through a cruel custom was denied to women and thus has raised them to the status to which they were entitled.

4174. Commentary :

The words "they go back on what they have said," may signify that after calling their wives "mothers" they seek to re-establish conjugal relations with them. Or the words may mean that after having once called their wives "mothers" they repeat what they have said. According to this meaning, it is deliberate repetition of the obnoxious words and not their casual or

inadvertent utterance that renders the utterer liable to the punishment prescribed in this and the following verse.

4175. Commentary :

The drastic punishment mentioned in these verses indicates the extreme seriousness of the crime of calling one's wife "mother." The relationship with "mother" is too sacred to be trifled with. The expression *لتؤمنوا بالله ورسوله* means, you may learn to obey the commandments of Allah and his Messenger.

4176. Important Words :

كُتِبَ (will be abased). *كُتِبَ* means, he threw him down prostrate. *كُتِبَ* الله الكافر means,

7. On the day when Allah will raise them all together, He will inform them of what they did. Allah has kept account of it, while they forgot it. And Allah is Witness over all things.

- 2 8. Dost thou not see that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? There is no secret counsel of three, but He is their fourth, nor of five, but He is their sixth, nor of less than that, nor of more, but He is with them wheresoever they may be. Then on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Surely, Allah knows all things well.⁴¹⁷⁷

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا
عَلَّ أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ٤

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا
خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا آدْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ
وَلَا أَكْثَرًا إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ
يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ

شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ٥

God prostrated the disbeliever, and deprived him of what he desired, or disappointed him, or caused him to fail in attaining his desire; he routed him or put him to flight; he turned him away or averted him; he abused; debased him, rendered him vile, despicable or ignominious.

(Aqrab)

Commentary :

Calling one's wife "mother" is tantamount to opposing God—so hideous is the offence. Befittingly the subject of opposition to Truth by the Jews and Hypocrites is introduced in this verse.

The words "and We have sent clear Signs," show that Divine punishment overtakes the sinners after their sins have been fully established and their guilt brought home to them.

4177. Commentary :

The subject which was only indirectly introduced in v. 6 has been elaborated in this and the next few verses. The present verse refers to the secret plots and conspiracies against Islam of the Jews and Hypocrites of Medina. It condemns this evil practice and warns them that their plots are not hidden from God. He has sent the Holy Prophet and He is his Guardian and Protector, and their conspiracies would do him no harm. They are further warned that they would be punished for their wicked designs. The expulsion of the three Jewish tribes from Medina was the result of their repeated acts of defection and infidelity and of their secret plots against Islam and against the life of the Holy Prophet.

9. Hast thou not seen those who were forbidden *to hold* secret counsels and again return to what they were forbidden, and confer in secret for sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger? And when they come to thee, they greet thee with *a greeting with which Allah has not greeted thee*;⁴¹⁷⁸ but among themselves they say, 'Why does not Allah punish us for what we say?' Sufficient for them is Hell, where-in they will burn; and a most evil destination it is!⁴¹⁷⁸

10. O ye who believe! when you confer together in secret, confer not for *the commission of* sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger, but confer for *the attainment of* virtue and righteousness, and fear Allah unto Whom you shall *all* be gathered.⁴¹⁷⁹

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَهَوْنَا عَنِ التَّجْوِي ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ
لِمَا نَهَوْنَا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَجَوْنَ بِالْأَثَمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا
لَمْ يُحْيِكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَيَقُولُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا
يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ حَسْبُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ يَصْلَوْنَهَا
فَإِنَّ الصَّيِيرَ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْا
بِالْأَثَمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعَ سِيِّئَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَاجَوْا
بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ①

a2 : 105 ; 4 : 47.

4178. Commentary :

The words, "they greet thee with which Allah has not greeted thee," may either mean that they go beyond proper limits in hypocritically praising thee, or that they invoke death and destruction upon thee. The words seem to refer to the evil practice of some of the Jews of Medina that when they came to see the Holy Prophet they, with a little twist of the tongue, would invoke curses upon him by saying السام عليك *i.e.*, death to thee; instead of saluting him with the usual السلام عليك *i.e.*, peace be

upon thee (Bukhārī). See also 2 : 105.

4179. Commentary :

In this and the preceding two verses secret societies such as Freemason Lodges, etc., have been condemned, but the condemnation is not unreserved or unqualified. There may be secret conferences held for good purposes. It is the object or motive of a particular conference that determines its nature. In the present verse the believers have been allowed to hold secret conferences only to promote good and righteous causes.

11. *Holding of secret counsels for evil purposes* is only of Satan, that he may cause grief to those who believe; but it cannot harm them in the least, except by Allah's leave. And in Allah should the believers put their trust.⁴¹⁸⁰

12. O ye who believe! when it is said to you, 'Make room!' in *your* assemblies, then do make room; Allah will make ample room for you. And when it is said, 'Rise up!' then rise up; Allah will raise those who believe from among you, and those to whom knowledge is given, to degrees of *rank*. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁸¹

13. O ye who believe! when you consult the Messenger in private, give alms before your consultation. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not *anything to give*, then Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴¹⁸²

إِنَّمَا التَّجْوِي مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزَنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَلَيْسَ بِضَارٍّ لَهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي
الْمَجْلِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ
انْشُرُوا فَانْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ
وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
وَأَظْهَرُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

44 : 159 ; 7 : 177.

4180. **Commentary :**

The disbelievers are warned that their secret societies and assemblies would not in any way harm the cause of Truth, try as they might.

4181. **Commentary :**

As in the preceding verses the subject of holding an assembly was dealt with, it was in the fitness of things that the ethics and etiquette of an assemblage should also be pointed out and this has been done in the present verse.

The commandment contained in the verse

is of a general nature but it may also have special application for a particular assembly in which the Holy Prophet was present.

4182. **Commentary :**

The believers have been enjoined, in this verse, to have due regard for the precious time of the Holy Prophet and as a compensation for taking his time to spend some money in charity before going to him for consultation.

14. Are you afraid of giving alms before your consultation? So, when you do not do so and Allah has been merciful to you, then observe Prayer and pay the Zakāt and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴¹⁸³

ءَاشْفَقْتُمْ أَن تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ
صَدَقْتُمْ فَاذْكُم تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَأَقِمْو الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. Hast thou not seen those who take for friends a people with whom Allah is wroth?^a They are neither of you nor of them, and they swear to falsehood knowingly.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكِبَرِ
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16. Allah has prepared for them a severe punishment. Evil indeed is that which they used to do.⁴¹⁸⁴

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17. They have made their oaths a shield for their falsehoods, and thereby they seek to turn men away from the path of Allah; for them, therefore, will be an humiliating punishment.⁴¹⁸⁵

اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٧﴾

^a60 : 14.

4183. Commentary :

The verse shows that the commandment about the giving of alms before seeking the Holy Prophet's consultation is not obligatory but optional, though its observance is preferable. The verse further signifies that the apprehension of the Companions of the Holy Prophet was whether they had given enough in alms to have complied with God's commandment.

4184. Commentary :

The words "with whom Allah is wroth" refer particularly to the Jews and Hypocrites of Medina but they also possess a general application.

4185. Commentary :

The verse means that the Hypocrites protest loudly the sincerity of their faith by swearing, and seek to take shelter behind their false oaths.

18. "Neither their wealth nor their children will avail them aught against Allah. They are the inmates of the Fire wherein they will abide.

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنْ
اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19. On the day when Allah will raise them all together, they will swear to Him even as they swear to you, and they will think that they have something to stand upon. Now, surely it is they who are the liars.⁴¹⁸⁶

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ ۙ كَمَا
يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۖ أَلَا
إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Satan has gained mastery over them, and has made them forget the remembrance of Allah. They are Satan's party. Now surely, it is Satan's party that are the losers.

إِسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ
أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ ۖ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ
هُمُ الْخَسِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. ^bCertainly those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be among the lowest.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادِّثُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي
الْأَذَلِّينَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Allah has decreed: 'Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers'.⁴¹⁸⁷ Verily, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَا غَلِبَتْنَا أَنَا وَرُسُلُنَا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ
عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a3 : 11 ; 92 : 12 ; 111 : 3.

^b9 : 63.

^c5 : 57 ; 10 : 104 ; 30 : 48 ; 37 : 172-173 ; 40 : 52.

4186. Commentary :

The verse shows that when a person becomes an habitual or hardened liar, he regards his falsehood as truth. The Hypocrites will protest their innocence even before God on the Day of Reckoning.

4187. Commentary :

It is writ large on the face of History that Truth has always prevailed against falsehood in the long run. The verse speaks of the invincible faith and conviction which is implanted in the minds of believers about the eventual triumph of their cause.

23. "Thou wilt not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, or their sons or their brethren, or their kindred. These are they in whose hearts Allah has inscribed *true* faith and whom He has strengthened with inspiration from Himself. And He will make them enter Gardens through which streams flow. Therein will they abide. ^bAllah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him. They are Allah's party. Hearken, it is Allah's party who will be successful.⁴¹⁸⁸

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ
أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ
كُتِبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانُ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ
مِّنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا
عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ

الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

^a3 : 29; 4 : 145; 9 : 23.

^b5 : 120 : 9 : 100 : 98 : 9.

4188. Commentary :

Obviously, there could be no true or sincere friendship or relationship of love between the Faithful and the disbelievers. The ideals, principles, and religious beliefs of the two being poles apart and the community of interest which is the *sine qua non* of intimate relationship being non-existent, the verse requires believers not to have intimate, loving and affec-

tionate friendship with disbelievers. The bond of belief transcends all other bonds, even the close ties of blood. The verse seems to have a general application. But it applies specially to disbelievers who are at war with Muslims. See also 60 : 10. The words, "Allah is well-pleased with them" constitute a Divine certificate of honour that is bestowed upon the Faithful who prefer God and His Messengers to all worldly connections, even very near blood relationships.

CHAPTER 59

SŪRA AL-HASHR

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūra* is decidedly a Medinite revelation. It is the third of the seven last Medinite *Sūrās* of the Qur'ān. It deals with the banishment from Medina of the Jewish tribe of Banū Naḍīr, which took place a few months after the Battle of Uhud, in the fourth year of the Hijra.

The preceding *Sūra* had dealt with the secret plots and machinations against Islam of the Jews of Medina. The present *Sūra* deals with their punishment, particularly with the banishment from Medina of the Banū Naḍīr, one of the three Jewish tribes—Banū Qainuquā', Banū Naḍīr and Banū Quraizah.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise God, signifying that the time has arrived when the great might and wisdom of God would be manifested and that whatever form the manifestation will take, it would demonstrate these two Divine attributes. The *Sūra* then proceeds to deal with the expulsion from Medina of the Jewish tribe of Banū Naḍīr by the Holy Prophet which was an act of great wisdom and political foresight on his part, because if the Jews had been allowed to remain in Medina they would have proved, on account of their conspiracies and secret plots, a source of constant danger to Islam. In view of their evil designs and machinations, their conspiracies and secret plots, their repeated acts of treachery and infidelity and the breach of their plighted word every now and then, the punishment of exile was extremely light. What rendered the punishment much lighter and lenient was the fact that they were allowed to take with them whatever they could.

Next, the *Sūra* deals with the Hypocrites of Medina who were neither true to Muslims nor to Jews. A hypocrite is essentially a coward, and a cowardly person is never sincere or honest to anyone. The Hypocrites of Medina proved dishonest even to the Jews in the hour of peril. The *Sūra* opens with Divine glorification and ends with an exhortation to Muslims to sing the praises of the Beneficent and Merciful Lord, Who had nipped the wicked designs of their enemies in the bud and had opened out endless vistas of progress and prosperity for them.

It is significant that the *Sūra* opens with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise God and ends with the prominent mention of these two Divine attributes. This signifies that the subject-matter of the *Sūra* deals with incidents which shed a flood of light on the mightiness and wisdom of God. The *Sūra* has close resemblance with *Sūra Al-Anfāl*, in that besides the similarity of the subject-matter of these two *Sūrās*, the Divine attribute, the Mighty, and the Severe in retribution, have been repeatedly mentioned in the latter *Sūra*.

سُورَةُ الْحَشْرِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.^a

2. ^bAll that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifies Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴¹⁸⁹

3. He it is Who turned out the disbelievers among the People of the Book from their homes at *the time of* the first banishment. You did not think that they would go forth, and they thought that their fortresses would defend them against Allah. But Allah came upon them^c whence they did not expect, and cast terror into their hearts,^d so that they destroyed their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers. So take a lesson, O ye who have eyes!⁴¹⁹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ②

هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا
وَظَنُّوا أَنْهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ
اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ
الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاَعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ③

^aSee 1 : 1 ^b17 : 45 ; 24 : 42 ; 61 : 2 ; 62 : 2 64 : 2. ^c16 : 27 ; 39 : 26. ^d3 : 152 ; 8 : 13.

4189. Commentary :

For note on سَبَّحَ see 57 : 2. But whereas تَسْبِيح (glorifying) is used with regard to God's attributes, تَقْدِيس (extolling His holiness) is used concerning His actions.

4190. Commentary :

There lived at Medina three Jewish tribes—Banū Qainuquā', Banū Naḍir and Banū Quraizah. The present verse refers to the banishment from Medina of the Banū Naḍir. This tribe like Banū Qainuquā' before them, had acted treacherously towards Muslims on several occasions. They had hatched plots and had entered into secret alliances against

them, with their enemies. They had repeatedly broken their plighted word and had repudiated the solemn agreement that they would remain neutral between the Holy Prophet and his enemies, and even had conspired to take his life. Their leader Ka'b bin Ashraf had gone to Mecca to enlist the help of the Quraish and of other pagan tribes around Mecca in order to drive out the Muslims from Medina. After the temporary reverse suffered by Muslims at Uhud, their machinations and defiance of the Prophet had greatly increased. It was when the cup of their iniquities had become full to the brim and their presence in Medina had proved to be a constant source of mortal danger to Muslims and the Islamic State that the Holy

4. And had it not been that Allah had decreed exile for them, He would have surely punished them *otherwise* in this world. And in the Hereafter they will certainly have the punishment of the Fire.⁴¹⁹¹

وَلَوْ لَا أَنْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٤١٩١﴾

Prophet had to take action against them. They were told to leave Medina. But the Prophet was exceptionally kind and considerate to them. He allowed them to carry their goods and chattels with them, and they departed from Medina in perfect safety, but not until they had despaired of the help they had expected from their Meccan allies and from the Hypocrites of Medina, and had also found that their fortresses which they thought were impregnable could not save them. The Holy Prophet laid siege to the fortresses and after vainly holding out for about 21 days, they surrendered. They all left for Syria, only two families choosing to remain behind at Khaibar.

The reference in the words, "at the time of the first banishment" may be to the banishment of the Jewish tribe of Banū Qainuquā' who had been expelled from Medina, sometime after the Battle of Badr, for their intrigues and defiance of the authority of the Holy Prophet, to whom they had pledged allegiance as the acknowledged Head of the Medina Republic. Or the words may refer to the banishment by the Holy Prophet from Medina of the three above-mentioned Jewish tribes. This was the first banishment. 'Umar, the Holy Prophet's Second Successor, however, banished all the Jews from the whole of Arabia for the second and last time. Thus the words, "at the time of the first banishment" may be taken as embodying a prophecy that after the Jewish tribes of Medina will have been banished by the Holy Prophet, all the Jews of Arabia would suffer the same fate at some later time.

Before departing from Medina the Banū Naḍīr had destroyed their houses and other movable property before the very eyes of Muslims, because the Holy Prophet had given them ten days to dispose of their affairs as they liked. Thus the Jews of Medina were the originators of the scorched earth policy, centuries before the Russians had adopted it in the World War II. The reference in the words "they destroyed their houses with their own hands," is to that policy.

The words, "you would not think that they would go forth," show that in view of the material resources, political alliances and organization of the Jews of Medina, the Muslims could not conceive that they could be driven out of Medina so easily and without any loss of human life on either side.

4191. Important Words :

الجلَاء (the banishment) is derived from جلا (jalā). They say جلا عن بلده i.e. he emigrated from his home. جلا عنه الهم means, he removed the grief from him or banished him. أجلاه means, he exiled (Lane & Aḥab).

Commentary :

The verse means that by their persistent evil designs and treachery the Jews of Medina, particularly the Banū Naḍīr, had incurred God's wrath. Their exile from Medina was a very light punishment. They had deserved a much heavier punishment, and had they not been exiled they would have been severely punished in some other form.

5. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger:⁶ and whoso opposes Allah—then surely Allah is Severe in retribution.^{4191A}

6. Whatever palm trees you cut down or left standing on their roots, it was by Allah's leave, and that He might disgrace the transgressors.⁴¹⁹²

7. And whatever Allah has given to His Messenger as spoils from them, you urged neither horse nor camel for that; but Allah gives authority to His Messengers over whomsoever He pleases; and Allah has power over all things.⁴¹⁹³

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِ
اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَبَنَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَى
أَصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ۝

وَمَا آفَاءُ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَرَجَفْتُمْ
عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ
رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

44 : 116 ; 8 : 14 ; 47 : 33.

4191A. Commentary :

The verse shows that opposing the Holy Prophet is tantamount to giving opposition to God Himself.

4192. Important Words :

لَبَنَة (palm tree) is derived from لَانَ which means, it was or became tender, smooth, gentle. لَبَنَة means, a palm tree. It is a kind of palm tree of which the dates are of very inferior quality and are unfit for human consumption (Aqrab & Al-Raud al-Anaf).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the cutting, by orders of the Holy Prophet, of the palm trees of the Banū Naḍīr who, as stated in v. 3, had shut themselves up in their fortresses in defiance of the Holy Prophet's orders to surrender. After the siege had lasted for some days, the Holy Prophet, in order to compel them to surrender, ordered that some of their palm trees of the *lina* (لَبَنَة) kind of which the dates are of

very inferior quality and are quite unfit for human consumption should be cut down. It was after only six trees had been cut down, that the Banū Naḍīr surrendered (Zurqānī). The orders of the Holy Prophet were extremely lenient and were legitimate and quite in conformity with the laws of civilized warfare.

4193. Important Words :

أَفَاء (given as spoils) is transitive verb from أَفَاءَ which means, he returned, particularly he returned to a good state or condition. أَفَاتِهِ means, I made it to return. فَيْئ means, afternoon shade; spoil or booty, so called because it returns from one party without difficulty; such of the possessions of disbelievers as accrue to Muslims without war or such as are obtained from them after laying down of arms. Loosely, the three words نَفْل and غَنِيمَة and فَيْئ are used synonymously. But whereas according to some غَنِيمَة signifies, what is obtained from disbelievers by force during war, فَيْئ signifies, what is obtained from them after laying down of arms or what God has given to Muslims of

8. Whatever Allah has given to His Messenger as spoils^a from the people of the towns is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, that it may not circulate *only* among those of you who are rich. And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it^b; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it. And fear Allah; surely, Allah is Severe in retribution⁴¹⁹⁴

مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ
وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَىٰ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ
مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ
عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

^a8 : 2, 42. ^b47 : 34; 49 : 8.

the goods of disbelievers such as poll-tax and that for which peace has been made with them or which they acquire without difficulty. According to some authorities غنيمة is more general in signification than نفل, and فيئى is more so than غنيمة. According to the lawyers everything that may be lawfully taken of the property and goods of disbelievers is فيئى. Thus غنيمة is that which is acquired with or without difficulty or labour, before or after the victory and نفل is that which is had before the division of غنيمة or which is acquired without fighting, and it differs from فيئى in this respect that whereas فيئى is applied to the spoil from the disbelievers after they have made preparation for war against Muslims, this condition does not apply to نفل (Lane & Aqrab).

ركاب (camels) is derived from ركب. They say ركب الدابة او على الدابة i.e., he rode upon the beast. ركب means, camels used for riding. It has no proper singular; the word used for singular is راحلة. ركب السحاب means, the winds (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse may have special reference to the spoils the Muslims got from the Jews of Khaibar. See next verse also.

4194. Important Words :

دولة (to circulate) is derived from دال. They say دالت الايام i.e., the days came round in their turns. دالت له الدولة means, good fortune came to him i.e., the turn of fortune was his. داول الله الايام بين الناس means, God made days to come round among men in turns. دولة (daulatun) as also دولة (dūlatun) means, a turn of good fortune; a turn to share in wealth and to prevail in war; a turn of taking a thing. Or دولة (dūlatun) is in wealth and دولة (daulatun) is in war : according to some the former signifies a thing that is taken by turns and the latter the act of taking by turns and a transition from one state to another. Or the former relates to the next world and the latter to the present world and it is said that the former signifies the transition of wealth from one people to another and the latter, prevalence, predominance or victory (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse deals with the subject as to how فيئى should be spent. As فيئى consists of such booty as is attained without difficulty or labour and accrues to Muslims without war, the soldiers have no share in it and the whole of it forms part of the public treasury to be spent as mentioned in the verse.

9. *These spoils are for the poor Refugees who have been driven out from their homes and their possessions while seeking grace from Allah and His pleasure,^a and helping Allah and His Messenger. These it is who are true in their faith.*⁴¹⁹⁵

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا
وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿٩﴾

^a5 : 3 ; 48 : 30.

Where soldiers are paid by the State, all spoils of war go to the public treasury *i.e.*, *Bait al-Māl*. Islam being a great advocate and protagonist of the cause of the poor and supporter and protector of their interests, the verse incidentally lays down the principle that the circulation of wealth should not remain confined to the privileged and propertied class. As an individual's health requires that his physical needs be reasonably met, a society's health requires that material goods be widely distributed and wealth be in easy circulation. This is the basic principle of Muslim economics and nowhere did the Holy Prophet's democratic thunder speak with greater force or clarity than in this field. Finding humanity ground down under the tyranny of vested interests, he propounded measures that broke the barriers of economic caste and enormously reduced the injustices of special privilege. The main principle of Muslim economics is that the wealth of the people be widely shared. Islam does not oppose the profit motive or economic competition. It does not

discourage a man from working harder than his neighbour, nor does it object to his earning a large income. It simply insists that acquisitiveness and competition be balanced by fair-play and compassion. Since human nature automatically takes care of the former, it falls to social laws to safeguard the latter. The *Zakāt* is Islam's basic device for institutionalizing regard for others, but it is supplemented by a number of other measures ("The Religions of Man" by Huston Smith)

The words, "whatever the Messenger gives you, take it," shows conclusively that the *Sunnat* forms an integral part of the Islamic Law.

4195. Commentary :

الفقراء seems to be case in apposition to the categories of recipients of the *فيئى* mentioned in the preceding verse. From *Ḥadīth* it appears that the poor Refugees were the greatest beneficiaries from *فيئى* obtained from Banū Naḍīr.

10. And *for* those who had established *their* home in *this* city and had accepted the faith before them, they love those who come to them for refuge, and find not in their breasts any desire for that which is given them (Refugees), but prefer the Refugees above themselves, even though poverty be their *own* lot. And whoso is rid of the covetousness of his own soul—it is these who will be successful.⁴¹⁹⁶

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ
مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ
حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ
كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

11. And *the spoils* are also *for* those who came after them. They say, 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in the faith, and leave not in our hearts any rancour against those who believe. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Compassionate, Merciful.'⁴¹⁹⁷

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ
لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا
تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ
رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

464 : 17.

4196. Important Words :

حاجة (desire) is derived from حاج which means, he was or became poor; he desired, sought or sought after. حاج و احتاج اليه means, he needed it. حاجة means, want, need, necessity; a thing wanted; an object of want; desire (Lane & Aqrab).

خصاصة (poverty) is inf. noun from خص which means, he was or became poor, in a state of poverty. خصاصة means, poverty, need; straitness or difficulty; an evil state or condition; thirst; hunger (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Whereas the preceding verse constituted an eloquent commentary on the sincerity and devotion of the Refugees (مهاجرين) to their faith, in that they left their hearths and homes for the

sake of God and his Messenger, the verse under comment embodies a great testimonial to the spirit of self-sacrifice, hospitality and goodwill of the Helpers (انصار). The Refugees from Mecca came to the Helpers, deprived and denuded of all their possessions, and the latter received them with open arms and made them equal partners in their belongings. The bond of love and brotherhood which the Holy Prophet established between the Refugees and the Helpers, and to which this verse bears an eloquent testimony, stands unrivalled in the whole history of human relationships. The verse may have special reference to the Helpers having foregone their share in the spoils that accrued to Muslims from the Jewish tribe of Banū Nadīr.

4197. Commentary :

The words 'those who came after them,' may apply to the Refugees who came later to Medina,

R. 2 12. Hast thou not seen those who are hypocrites? They say to their brethren who disbelieve among the People of the Book, 'If you are turned out, we will surely go out with you, and we will never obey anyone against you: and if you are fought against, we will certainly help you.' But Allah bears witness that surely they are liars.⁴¹⁹⁸

13. If they are turned out, they will never go out with them; and if they are fought against they will never help them. And even if they help them, they will assuredly turn *their backs*,^a and then they shall not be helped.^{4199a}

14. Of a truth, they have greater fear of you in their hearts than of Allah.^b That is because they are a people who are devoid of *all* reason.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ إِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ
مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُسَبِّحُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ
لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا
لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُولَيَنَّ الْآدِبَارَ
ثُمَّ لَا يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

لَا أَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

^a3 : 112.

^b4 : 78.

or to all the coming generations of Muslims, or particularly to the followers of the Promised Messiah to whom appointed reference is made in 62 : 3.

The later generations of Muslims have been commanded here to pray for their brethren in Faith of earlier generations and to pray also that their own hearts be completely cleansed of all bitterness and spite towards true and sincere Muslims. What a beautiful recipe by which Muslims can become cemented into a well-knit community!

4198. Commentary :

A hypocrite is a liar and a coward. He is completely unreliable and devoid of all honour. The Hypocrites of Medina had urged the Jews of Medina to defy the Holy Prophet and break

their plighted word with him, holding out to them false promises of help and succour in time of need. But when relying upon their promises the Jews defied the Prophet and he, in order to punish them, marched against them, the Hypocrites left them in the lurch.

4199. Commentary :

This verse, like vv. 15-16 below, is a sad commentary on the infidelity of the Hypocrites. When the hour arrived for the Jews to be deservedly punished for their evil designs and deeds, the Hypocrites of Medina did not raise a finger in their support. "And," says the verse, "if they had summoned up courage enough to come to the help of the Jews, they certainly would have suffered a most crushing and ignominious defeat."

15. They will not fight you in a body except in fortified towns or from behind walls. Their fighting among themselves is severe. Thou thinkest them to be united, but their hearts are divided. That is because they are a people who have no sense.⁴²⁰⁰

16. *Their case is like the case of those who, a short time before them tested the evil consequences of their doings. And for them is a painful punishment.*⁴²⁰¹

17. *“Or it is like that of Satan, when he says to man, ‘Disbelieve’ but when he disbelieves, he says, ‘I have nothing to do with thee; I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds.’”*⁴²⁰²

18. And the end of both is that they are both in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the reward of the wrongdoers.

لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَىٰ مُّحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ
مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ
جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٠٠﴾

كَشَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهُمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٠١﴾

كَشَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ
قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٠٢﴾

فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَ
ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠٣﴾

48 : 49 ; 14 : 23.

4200. Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers—particularly the Jews and the Hypocrites of Medina—seem to present a false facade of unity against Islam, but as they have no common cause to fight for, and as their interests are diverse and divergent, there can possibly exist no real unity among them. There were three parties in Arabia who appeared to be united against the Islamic State—the Jews, the Hypocrites of Medina and the pagan Quraish of Mecca. The Quraish found in the rising power of Islam a danger to their autocracy, the Hypocrites (of whom ‘Abdullah bin Ubayy was the leader) to their domination in Medina, and the Jews to their organization and racial superiority. Having no common objective their seeming unity had no real basis and it never

materialized in time of danger.

4201. Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to the Quraish of Mecca who sustained an ignominious defeat at Badr or to Banū Qainuquā’ who were punished for their mischiefs and machinations after Badr. They were the first of the three Jewish tribes who broke their pledged word with the Holy Prophet and were banished from Medina one month after the Battle of Badr. They settled in Syria.

4202. Commentary :

The verse mentions one more mark of a hypocrite. When relying upon his seductive promises his victim gets involved in trouble, he leaves him alone, disowning all responsibility for his misfortune.

R. 3 19. "O ye who believe! fear Allah and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; verily Allah is Well-Aware of what you do."⁴²⁰³

20. And be not like those who forgot Allah,^b so He caused to forget their own souls. It is they that are the rebellious.⁴²⁰⁴

21. The inmates of the Fire and the inmates of the Garden are not equal.^c It is the inmates of the Garden that will triumph.⁴²⁰⁵

22. If We had sent down this Qur'an on a mountain,^d thou wouldst certainly have seen it humbled and rent asunder for fear of Allah. And these are similitudes that We set forth for mankind that they may reflect.⁴²⁰⁶

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ
لِغَدٍّ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابُ
الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا
مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ
نَضَرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

^a4 : 2; 33 : 71.

^b9 : 67.

^c38 : 29 ; 45 : 22.

^d13 : 32.

4203. Commentary :

The root-cause of all sin is neglect and negligence. The believers here are enjoined to take care of the morrow. And there could be no real moral or spiritual progress without a sure, sincere and true belief in God.

4204. Commentary :

Man forgets God in three ways: (1) He rejects the very belief in the existence of God. (2) He has no real, true or living belief in a Supreme Being before Whom he shall have to render an account of his deeds (3) Forgetfulness. The inevitable and never-failing consequence of consigning God to oblivion is that man gets involved in matters which bring about his moral degradation and spiritual downfall, ending with loss of peace of mind.

4205. Commentary :

The inmates of the Fire have been mentioned in the preceding verse and the inmates of the Garden in the verse before that. The present verse states that the two parties are not, and never can be, equal.

4206. Commentary :

Metaphorically, the word جبل signifies a big and proud man; the chief or leader of a people. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that the Qur'an contains such a sublime and powerful Message that it would make the heart of even a proud man melt. Or the verse may signify that the proud pagan Arabs whom no pre-Islamic teaching could wean from their polytheistic beliefs and idolatrous practices and who like a strong rock

23. He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen.^a He is the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴²⁰⁷

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ①

24. He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One,^b the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah *far* above that which they associate *with Him*.⁴²⁰⁸

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ
السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ
سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ②

25. He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him,^c and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²⁰⁹

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى
يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ③

^a6 : 74 ; 9 : 94 ; 13 : 10 ; 64 : 19. ^b7 : 181 ; 20 : 9 ; 62 : 2.

^c17 : 45 ; 24 : 42 ; 61 : 2 ; 62 : 2 ; 64 : 2.

remained unmoved and firmly wedded to their Bedouin usages unaffected by the erosive influence of the glamour and glitter of the neighbouring Christian civilization, would be humbled before its sublime and powerful Message, and from their stony hearts would gush forth fountains of light and learning.

4207. Commentary :

The verse means that the Qur'ān, before whose powerful Message even tall and firm mountains would crumble and fall, has been revealed by God Whose attributes are inimitable and matchless. He knows everything and nothing is hidden from Him. He provides his creatures, out of His bountiful grace and mercy, and not in return for anything done by them, all the means of their development and progress even before they are born.

4208. Commentary :

God is the King Who is free from every fault, defect, or deficiency. He is the Source of all peace, and the Granter of safety and security. He is Guardian over all, overcoming every power, the Mender of every breakage and the Restorer of every loss; and He is above every need and is the Besought of all.

4209. Commentary :

God, as represented by the Qur'ān, is the Maker of bodies, the Creator of souls, the Fashioner *i.e.* the Giver of final touches to things created by Him. Such is the God of Islam, the Mighty, the Wise. To Him belong all excellent titles that man can imagine. The dwellers of the heavens and the earth declare His Sanctity and Holiness. He is the Great, and the Powerful.

CHAPTER 60

SŪRA AL-MUMTAHANAH

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

Like its three predecessors this *Sūra* was revealed, as its contents show, at Medina, in the 7th or 8th year of Hijra, sometime during the interval between the Treaty of Hudaibiya and the Fall of Mecca. The *Sūra* takes its title from the 11th verse in which it is enjoined that believing women should be examined when they come as refugees. The preceding *Sūra* had dealt with the intrigues and machinations of the Hypocrites and the Jews of Medina and with the punishment which was meted out to them. The present *Sūra* deals with the believers' social relations with disbelievers in general, and with those at war with Islam in particular, making a pointed reference to the status and position in Muslim society of believing women who migrated to Medina, and also to those disbelieving women who left their believing husbands at Medina and went to Mecca.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with an emphatic prohibitory injunction to Muslims against having friendly relations with those disbelievers who are at war with, and are bent upon extirpating Islam. The injunction is so strict and comprehensive that even very near blood relationships have not been exempted from it. The noble conduct in this respect of the Patriarch Abraham, who did not hesitate to sever all connections with his uncle, Āzar, who had proved himself to be an enemy of God, has been held out as an example to be followed. The prohibitory injunction is followed by an implied prophecy that very soon the implacable enemies of Islam would become its devoted followers. The injunction, however, has its exception. It does not apply to those disbelievers who have good neighbourly relations with Muslims and are not inimically disposed towards them. Such disbelievers are to be treated equitably and with kindness.

Next, the *Sūra* lays down some important directions with regard to believing women who migrated to Medina, and also with regard to women who left Medina and went over to disbelievers. In order to bring home to Muslims the seriousness and importance of the matter, the *Sūra* closes with a reminder of the injunction that Muslims are not to make friends with those people, who, by adopting an openly hostile attitude towards Islam, have incurred God's wrath.

سُورَةُ الْمُنَافِقَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٩٠)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O ye who believe! take not My enemy and your enemy for friends,^b offering them love, while they disbelieve in the truth which has come to you *and*^c drive out the Messenger and yourselves *merely* because you believe in Allah, your Lord. If you go forth, to strive in My cause and seek My pleasure, *take them not for friends*, sending them *messages of love* in secret, while I know best what you conceal and what you reveal. And whoever of you does it, has surely lost the right path.⁴²¹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ
أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا
جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ
تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا
فِي سَبِيلِي وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِي تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِمْ
بِالْمَوَدَّةِ ۖ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ②

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b3 : 119 ; 4 : 145 ; 5 : 58.

^c17 : 77.

4210. Commentary :

The prohibitory injunction contained in the verse is of a very strict character. Muslims are not to have friendly relations with the avowed enemies of God—those who drove out the Prophet and the Muslims from their hearths and homes and sought to destroy Islam. The prohibition is all-comprehensive in this respect that no consideration of bonds or ties of even the nearest blood relationships is allowed to interfere with it. The enemy of Islam is God's enemy, whosoever he may be.

The immediate occasion of the revelation of the verse under comment was that when the

Quraish did not honour the Treaty of Hudaibiya, and the Holy Prophet had to take stern punitive action against them, Hātib bin Abī Balta'h had written a secret letter to the Meccans informing them of the Holy Prophet's intended march on Mecca. The Prophet, informed by revelation about it sent 'Alī, Zubair and Miqdād, in search of the bearer of the letter. They overtook the messenger—she was a woman—on the way to Mecca and the letter was brought back to Medina. Hātib's offence was extremely grave. He had sought to divulge an important State secret. He deserved exemplary punishment. Incidentally, the episode of the letter fixes the date of revelation of the *Sūra*.

3. If they get the upper hand of you, they will be your *active* enemies, and will stretch forth their hands and their tongues towards you with evil *intent*; and they ardently desire that you should become disbelievers.⁴²¹¹

إِنْ يَتَّقِفُواكُمْ يَكُونُوا أَعْدَاءً وَيَسْطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتُهُم بِالسُّوءِ وَوَدُّوا لَوْ
تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

4. "Neither your ties of kindred nor your children will avail aught on the Day of Resurrection. He will decide between you. And Allah sees all that you do."⁴²¹²

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

31 : 11, 32 : 34.

4211. Important Words :

يَتَّقِفُواكُمْ (get the upper hand of you) is derived from تَقَفَّ and تَقَفَّه means, he perceived it or attained it by deed or by knowledge; he reached him; he found him: he overtook him; he gained mastery over him; he overcame him and got possession of him (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse indicates how bitter are the feelings of disbelievers towards Muslims. They would use all means, their hands and

tongues, etc., and would spare no effort to harm Muslims, and the greatest desire of their hearts is to see them revert to disbelief.

4212. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a severe warning to those Muslims who, in defiance of the above clear Divine commandment, maintain friendly relations with their relatives, if the latter are at war with them or entertain hostile feelings towards Islam. The Commandment makes no exception even of the nearest blood relations.

5. "There is a good model for you in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, ^b"We have nothing to do with you and with that which you worship beside Allah. We disbelieve all that you *believe*. There has arisen enmity and hatred between us and you for ever, until you believe in Allah alone"—except that Abraham said to his father, "I will surely ask forgiveness for thee, though I have no power to do aught for thee against Allah. *They prayed to God saying, 'Our Lord, in Thee do we put our trust and to Thee do we turn repentant, and towards Thee is the final return.*"⁴²¹³

6. 'Our Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve,^d and forgive us, our Lord; for Thou alone art the Mighty, the Wise.'⁴²¹⁴

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ
مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءُكُمْ وَمِمَّا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَّلَ بَيْنَنَا
وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا
بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَ
لَكَ وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ
تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ⑤

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاعْفُ رُبَّنَا
رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ⑥

^a60 : 7. ^b6 : 79 ; 43 : 27. ^c9 : 114 ; 19 : 48 ; 26 : 87. ^d10 : 86.

4213. Commentary :

Abraham, as elsewhere stated in the Qur'ān (11 : 76), was a model of forbearance and tender-heartedness. His example has been mentioned here to emphasize the fact that whenever it becomes clear that a certain person or people are inimically disposed towards Truth and are bent upon extirpating it, all friendly relations with them are to be given up. The verse also implies that when God has brought into being a better brotherhood—the Brotherhood of Faith—than blood relationships, then why should Muslims be anxious to have friendly relations with those who are the enemies of God and His Prophet?

The expression كفرنا بكم which is generally

translated as, 'we disbelieve all that you believe may also mean, "we have nothing to do with you;" the words كفر بكذا meaning, he declared himself to be clear or quit of such a thing (Lane).

4214. Commentary :

In the preceding verses believers were enjoined not to have friendly relations with those disbelievers who were at war with them as it was calculated to weaken the solidarity of their Community. The verse under comment, teaches them to pray that God may save them from disobeying this wise Divine commandment, as its disregard is sure to weaken Muslim solidarity and thus to provide encouragement to disbelievers to attack them.

7. Surely, there is a good example in them for you^a—for *all* who have hope in Allah and the Last Day. And whosoever turns away—truly, Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ④

R. 2 8. It may be that Allah will bring about love between you and those of them with whom you are *now* at enmity; and Allah is All-Powerful; and Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²¹⁵

عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُمْ
مِّنْهُمْ مَّوَدَّةً وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ⑤

9. Allah forbids you not, respecting those who have not fought against you on account of *your* religion, and who have not driven you forth from your homes, that you be kind to them and deal equitably with them; surely, Allah loves those who are equitable.⁴²¹⁶

لَا يَنْهَىكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي
الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ
وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْقَاسِطِينَ ⑥

^a60 : 5.

4215. Commentary :

The verse implied a prophecy. The Companions of the Holy Prophet were told that if they were enjoined to renounce all friendly relations with the enemies of their Faith, even though the latter were their very near blood relations, the prohibition was indeed destined to be very short-lived. The time was fast approaching when the erstwhile enemies would become their loving friends. The prophecy was soon fulfilled. After the fall of Mecca, the Quraish joined the fold of Islam *en masse* and became united with Muslims into one brotherhood.

4216. Commentary :

The verse makes it clear that the command-

ment to Muslims to have nothing to do with disbelievers has a proviso. It applies only to those disbelievers, as the next verse shows, who are at war with Muslims and are inimically disposed towards Islam. Friendly relations as such with non-Muslims are not forbidden. Besides, extra emphasis has been laid, in this verse, on kind and equitable treatment of non-Muslims.

The fact that this and the following verse were revealed at a time when relations between Muslims and disbelievers were highly strained helps to understand the real purpose and object of the prohibitory commandment.

10. "Allah only forbids you, respecting those who have fought against you on account of *your* religion, and have driven you out of your homes, and have helped *others* in driving you out, that you make friends with them, and whosoever makes friends with them—it is these that are the transgressors.⁴²¹⁷

11. O ye who believe! when believing women come to you as Refugees, examine them. Allah knows best their faith. Then, if you find them *true* believers, send them not back to the disbelievers. These *women* are not lawful for them, nor are they lawful for these *women*. But give *their disbelieving husbands* what they have spent *on them*. Thereafter it is no sin for you to marry them, when you have given them their dowries.^b And hold not to *your* matrimonial ties with the disbelieving women;^c but demand *the return of* that which you have spent; and let *the disbelievers* demand that which they have spent. That is the judgment of Allah. He judges between you. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.⁴²¹⁸

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَى اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا فِي الدِّينِ
وَإَخْرَجُواكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ
أَنْ تَوَلَّوْهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمْ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهْجِرَاتٍ
فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ
مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ
لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ۚ وَاتَّوهُم مَّا أَنْفَقُوا
وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تَنْسِكُوا بِعَصَمِ الْكَوَافِرِ وَ سَأَلُوا
مَّا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ أَنْفَقُوا ۚ ذَلِكُمْ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ
يُحْكَمُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ②

44 : 145 ; 5 : 52. b4 : 5, 25. c2 : 222.

4217. Commentary :

See preceding verse.

4218. Commentary :

Here is a testimony to the irresistible appeal of the Message of Islam. At a time when Muslims were being bitterly persecuted and it was not safe to leave Mecca and join the Muslim Community at Medina, a continuous stream of believers was pouring into Medina, leaving behind in Mecca their dear and near ones. These Refugees contained a fair number of women among them. The verse

under comment refers to such refugee Muslim women. The verse also constitutes an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's anxiety not to accept into the Muslim Community any woman who had fled from Mecca unless there was proof available, after subjecting her to searching examination, that she was sincere, and honest in her faith and that she was accepting Islam from no ulterior or otherwise objectionable motives. The verse further states that the marriage-tie between a refugee believing woman and her disbelieving husband becomes dissolved when she joins the Muslim Community, and a believer is allowed to marry

12 And if any of your wives goes away from you to the disbelievers, and you have your turn of triumph and get some spoils from them, then give to those believers whose wives have gone away the like of that which they had spent on their wives. And fear Allah in Whom you believe.⁴²¹⁹

وَأِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ
فَعَاقِبْتُمْ فَاتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَاجُهُمْ مِّثْلَ
مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

such a woman, provided he fulfils two conditions : (a) He should have paid back to the disbelieving husband of such woman what the latter had spent on her, and (b) he should also have fixed or paid her her dowry. Similarly, the marriage-tie between a Muslim and his wife who gives up Islam could not continue and the same procedure would be adopted if such an apostate woman marries a disbeliever as in the case of marriage between a Muslim and a refugee believing woman. The reciprocal arrangement prescribed in this verse is not the private affair of the individuals concerned but is to be carried out by the State, as is the practice in time of war, to which the verses particularly apply; there could not and should not continue any social relations between individual believers and individual disbelievers.

4219. Important Words :

عَاقِبْتُمْ (you have your turn) is derived from عَقِبَ الرجل . They say عَقِبَ الرجل *i.e.*, he took from the man's property the like of what the latter had taken from him. عَاقِبَهُ means,

he did a thing with the man alternately and taking his turn; he retaliated (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

If the wife of a Muslim deserts to disbelievers and thereafter a woman from among disbelievers is taken by Muslims as prisoner of war, or she flees from disbelievers and joins the Muslim Community, then the believing husband is to be compensated for the loss of the dowry paid by him to his deserting wife from the sum due to the disbelieving husband whose wife has joined the Muslim Community if the dowries are equal, but the deficiency, if any, is to be made up collectively by Muslims, or, as some authorities say, from the booty acquired by Muslims in war; the word عَاقِبْتُمْ meaning غَنِمْتُمْ *i.e.*, you have acquired booty. This arrangement was necessary as disbelievers refused to return the dowries paid by their believing husbands to the women who had deserted to them.

13. O Prophet! when believing women come to thee, taking the oath of allegiance *at thy hands* that they will not associate anything with Allah, and that they will not steal, and will not commit adultery, nor kill their children, nor bring forth a scandalous charge which they themselves have deliberately forged, nor disobey thee in what is right, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Verily, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²²⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَى
أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ
وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ
فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

14. O ye who believe! take not for friends a people with whom Allah is wroth;^a they have indeed despaired of the Hereafter just as have the disbelievers despaired of those who are in the graves.⁴²²¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
قَدْ يَسُوءُ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا يَبِيسُ الْكَفَّارُ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ ﴿١٤﴾

458 : 15.

4220. **Commentary :**

The expression, *بين أيديهن و أرجلهن* means from themselves or by themselves.

4221. **Commentary :**

The verse sums up the subject-matter of the *Sūra*, viz., that there could be no real union of hearts without community of ideals and principles and that the beliefs and ideas of believers

and disbelievers are poles apart from each other. The last sentence of the verse may mean that disbelievers have despaired of the Hereafter *i.e.*, they have absolutely no faith in the Hereafter, just as they have no faith that the dead would ever again come to life. The word "they" may also refer to the Jews, since the expression "with whom Allah is wroth," has been used about the Jews in several verses of the Qur'an.

CHAPTER 61

SŪRA AL-SAFF

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This *Sūra* takes its title from v. 5 which enjoins Muslims to fight in the cause of Allah in solid ranks (صَفًّا), “as if they were a strong, cemented structure.” The *Sūra* was revealed at Medina, probably in the third or fourth year of Hijra, after the Battle of Uhud, as v. 5 seems to possess an implied reference to the lack of discipline or unquestioning obedience to the Holy Prophet, of which some of the Muslims were guilty in that battle.

The preceding two *Sūrās* had dealt with the subject of war against disbelievers, and with social and political problems arising out of it. The *Sūra* under comment emphasizes the importance of giving unqualified and unquestioning obedience to the Leader, and of presenting, under his guidance, a solid, compact and united front to disbelievers.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the glorification of God’s Wisdom and Might, and proceeds to admonish believers that when they glorify God and extol His Holiness with their tongues, they should also glorify Him with their actions, thus making their actions harmonize with their verbal declarations. So, when they are called upon to fight in the cause of Truth, they should present a firm and solid front to disbelievers, and should give unqualified obedience to their Leader.

The *Sūra* then makes a brief reference to the misbehaviour of the followers of Moses who, by disobeying and defying him, caused him much vexation and mental anguish, and, by implication, warns Muslims never to behave like them. Next, mention is made of the prophecy of Jesus about the advent of the Holy Prophet, followed by a firm declaration that all the attempts of the votaries of darkness to extinguish the Light of Allah would come to nought. The Light will continue to shine in all its glory and effulgence and Islam will prevail over all religions. But before this comes to pass, the followers of Islam shall have to “strive with their wealth and persons in the cause of Allah.” Only then will they deserve to be blessed with God’s pleasure and material glory—“with Gardens through which streams flow.” The *Sūra* closes with exhorting Muslims to help God’s cause, as did the disciples of Jesus by undergoing all manner of sacrifice and suffering for it.

سُورَةُ الصَّفِّ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٦١﴾

1. "In the name of Allah the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. ^bWhatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²²²

3. O ye who believe! why do you say what you do not ?⁴²²³

4. Most hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not.

5. ^cVerily, Allah loves those who fight in His cause arrayed in *solid* ranks, as though they were a *strong* structure cemented with *molten* lead.⁴²²⁴

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ

الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا
كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُوصٌ ﴿٥﴾

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b17 : 45 ; 24 : 42 ; 57 : 2 ; 62 : 2 ; 64 : 2. ^c9 : 111.

4222. **Commentary :**

See 57 : 2.

4223. **Commentary :**

Muslims are told here that their actions should correspond to their professions. Boastful, empty talk carries one nowhere and verbal professions unattended by deeds smack of hypocrisy and insincerity.

4224. **Important Words :**

مرصوص (strong). They say رص البناء i.e., he made the building firm and compact, or he made it firm and strong; he joined it together; he stuck it together, one part to another, so that there might be no interstice in it; he plastered

it with lead. تراصوا means, they placed themselves close together in prayer or in battle so that there was no intervening space among them. بئر مرصوة means, a well cased with lead (Lane & Agrab).

Commentary :

Muslims are expected to present a firm, compact and united front to the forces of evil, under the command of their Leader whom they should give full and unqualified obedience. But for a people to become united into a solid and strong community, they must possess one code of life, one ideal, one objective and destination and one programme to achieve that objective.

6. And *remember* when Moses said to his people, 'O my people, why do you vex and slander me and you know that I am Allah's Messenger unto you?' So when they deviated *from the right course*, Allah caused their hearts to deviate, for Allah guides not the rebellious people.⁴²²⁵

7. And *remember* when Jesus, son of Mary, said, 'O Children of Israel, surely I am Allah's Messenger unto you, fulfilling that which is before me of the Torah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me; his name being Ahmad.' And when he came to them with clear proofs,^a they said, 'This is manifest sorcery.'⁴²²⁶

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يُقَوْمِ لِمَ تُوذُونَنِي وَقَدْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ①

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ②

^a27 : 14 ; 43 : 31.

4225. Commentary :

Perhaps no Prophet of God suffered so much mental agony at the hands of his followers as did Moses. Among many other Signs Moses's people had seen the mighty hosts of Pharaoh drown before their very eyes and yet they had hardly crossed the sea when they wanted to revert to idolatry, and seeing some people worshipping idols asked Moses to set up one such idol for them. They defied Moses's brother, the Prophet Aaron, and worshipped the calf (7 : 149). When asked to march into Canaan which God had promised to them they scornfully and quite brazen-facedly told Moses to go with his Lord upon Whom he had relied so much; they were not going to budge an inch from the place where they had settled (5:25). Thus Moses was repeatedly insulted by, and balked in his efforts to reclaim from idolatry, the very people whom he had delivered from the crushing bondage of Pharaoh. They even slandered

and defamed him. It is to such vexatious act of these ungrateful people that the Qur'an has referred in 33: 70.

4226. Important Words :

حمده (Aḥmad) is derived from حمد and means, he praised, eulogised or commended him; spoke well of him; he requited him; he gave him his due. أحمد (Aḥmada) means, he did or said that for which he should be praised or which was praiseworthy. أحمد الشيء means, the thing was or became praiseworthy. أحمد means, one who praises much or who is praised much or most (Lane & Tāj).

Commentary :

The prophecy of Jesus about the coming of *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth as given in the Gospels is as follows :

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you

another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive because it sees him not, neither knoweth him.....but when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.....for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you..... I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to comeHe shall glorify me (John 14 : 16-17. 15 : 26 ; 16 : 7, 12-14).

From these verses of the Gospel of John the following inferences are clearly deducible :

(1) That *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth could not come unless Jesus should have departed from the world.

(2) That the Comforter was to abide in the world for ever.

(3) That he was to say many things which Jesus himself could not tell because the world could not then bear them.

(4) That he would guide men unto all truth.

(5) That he would not speak of himself, but whatever he would hear that would he speak.

(6) That the Comforter would glorify Jesus and testify of him.

This description of *Paraclete* or the Comforter or the Spirit of Truth is in complete harmony with the status and mission of the Holy Prophet as given in the Qur'ān :

(1) The Holy Prophet appeared after Jesus had departed from this world.

(2) He is the last Law-giving Prophet and the Qur'ān the last revealed Divine Law for the whole of mankind till the end of time (5 : 4).

(3) Jesus could not guide mankind to all truth because his Message was meant only for a particular people and for a particular period, and the Law as amended and given to the Jews by him was not and could not be a complete and perfect Law because they had not yet mentally and morally so developed as to be the bearers of a complete *Shari'at* and the world had to wait till it was given a perfect Law in the form of the Qur'ān (5 : 4) and a Prophet *par excellence* i.e., the Holy Prophet who could guide all mankind.

(4) The Holy Prophet gave to the world a Law complete in all its details which alone could guide mankind unto all truth (5 : 4).

(5) The Holy Prophet did not speak of himself but whatever he heard from God that did he speak (53 : 4).

(6) The Holy Prophet glorified Jesus (2 : 254; 3 : 56).

The prophecy in the Gospel of John resembles the prophecy mentioned in the verse under comment except that instead of *Aḥmad* the name stated therein is *Paraclete*. Christian writers challenge the correctness of the Quranic version of the prophecy, basing their contention on this difference of names, irrespective of the otherwise similar features of Biblical & Quranic versions.

In fact, Jesus spoke Aramaic and Hebrew. Aramaic was his mother tongue and Hebrew his religious language. The present Biblical version is the translation of Aramaic and Hebrew into Greek.

A translation naturally cannot fully convey the beauty of the text. Languages have their limitations. The same is true of the people who speak them. Their limitations are reflected in their works. The Greek language has another word, i.e., *Periklutos*, with a similar meaning as *Aḥmad* in Arabic. Jack Finegan, the renowned theologian, in his book, "The Archaeology of World Religions," says :

8. "But who does greater wrong than one who forges a lie against Allah while he is called to Islam? Allah guides not the wrong-doing people.⁴²²⁷

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ
يُذْعَىٰ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

46 : 22 ; 10 : 18 ; 11 : 19.

"Where in Greek the word Comforter (Parakletos) is very similiar to the word for 'renowned' (Periklutos), the latter being the meaning of the names Ahmad & Muhammad."

Moreover, "The Damascus Document" a scripture discovered towards the end of the nineteenth century in Ezra synagogue, Old Cairo (p. 2. lines 12, 13) describes Jesus as having foretold the advent of a "Holy Spirit," named *Emeth*.

و یو دیمیم یید شیحو روح قدشو و هوا ایمة و بفروش
شمو شمو تیهم

i.e. And by His Messiah, He has made them know His Holy Spirit. For it is He who is *Emeth* i.e., "The Truthful One, and in accordance with His name are also theirs.

"Emeth" in Hebrew means "the Truth," or "the Truthful one and a person of constant goodness" (Strachan's Fourth Gospel, page 141). The word was interpreted by the Jews as "God's Seal." Naturally, though Jesus must have used the name Ahmad, the phonetic resemblance of the two words (Ahmad & Emeth) caused later writers to substitute "Emeth" for Ahmad, its Hebrew synonym.

Thus the prophecy mentioned in the verse under comment applies to the Holy Prophet, but as a corollary it may also apply to the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, since in his person the Second

Manifestation of the Holy Prophet took place. To this Second Manifestation or Second Coming of the Holy Prophet, the third verse of the next *Sūra*—Al-Jumu'ah pointedly refers.

It may be mentioned here that a prophecy about the Holy Prophet is also clearly stated in Gospel of Barnabas which is treated by the Church as apocryphal but which has as much claim to be accepted as authentic as any of the four Gospels.

4227. Commentary :

The preceding verse having been applied to the Holy Prophet, the expression "who can be more unjust than one who forges a lie against Allah while he is called to Islam" would refer to those rejectors of Truth to whom he addressed his Message, since he was the Inviter (داعی) and they the invitees (20 : 109 & 33 : 47), and having rejected his Message and by intentionally misinterpreting Divine prophecies they belonged to that class of people who in the Qur'an have been called forgers of lies against God (6 : 138—141). But if the prophecy be taken to apply to the Promised Messiah the expression, "he is called to Islam," would signify that the Promised Messiah would be invited by the so-called defenders of Islam to recant, repent and be a Muslim like them, for, according to them, by his claim to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdī he would cease to be one.

9. "They desire to extinguish the light of Allah with *the breath* of their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, however much the disbelievers hate it.⁴²²⁸

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ
نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10. ^bHe it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners *with God* hate it.⁴²²⁹

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ
لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

2 11. O ye who believe! shall I point out to you a bargain that will save you from a painful punishment?⁴²³⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ
مِّنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١١﴾

12. "That you believe in Allah and His Messenger, and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your persons. That is better for you, if you did but know.⁴²³¹

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

^a9 : 32. ^b9 : 33 ; 48 : 29. ^c9 : 20, 41.

4228. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet has been repeatedly called the "Light of Allah," in the Qur'an (4 : 175; 5 : 17 ; 64 : 9). All the efforts of the enemies of Islam to extinguish this Divine Light has signally failed and Islam has gone on from strength to strength and will one day embrace in its fold the major enlightened part of all mankind.

4229. Commentary :

Most Commentators of the Qur'an are agreed that this verse applies to the Promised Messiah in whose time all religions will make their appearance and the superiority of Islam over all of them will be established.

This and the previous verse contain two

very challenging prophecies, the present one about the establishment of the superiority of Islam over other Faiths and the preceding one about the total failure of the enemies of Islam to extinguish its light.

4230. Commentary :

This verse seems to refer to the time of the Promised Messiah when trade and commerce will flourish and there will be a mad rush for striking profitable bargains.

4231. Commentary :

The reference in the verse again seems to be to the present time—the era of the Promised Messiah, in which, in the absence of religious wars, monetary sacrifice is given precedence

13. He will forgive you your sins, and make you enter the Gardens through which streams flow, and pure and pleasant dwellings in Gardens of Eternity^a. That is the supreme triumph.⁴²³²

14. And *He will bestow upon you another favour which you love: help from Allah and a near victory. So give glad tidings to the believers.*

15. O ye who believe! be helpers of Allah, as said Jesus, son of Mary, to *his* disciples, 'Who are my helpers in the cause of Allah?' The disciples said, 'We are helpers of Allah^b.' So a party of the Children of Israel believed, while a party disbelieved. Then We gave power to those who believed against their enemy, and they became victorious.⁴²³³

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسْكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ^{١٣}

وَأُخْرَى تَحِبُّونَهَا نَصْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ وَبَشِيرٌ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ^{١٤}

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيِّينَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ فَأَمْنَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرَتْ طَائِفَةٌ فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَى عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا ظَاهِرِينَ^{١٥}

^a9 : 72 ; 19 : 62 ; 20 : 77. ^b3 : 53 ; 5 : 112.

over other forms of sacrifice. The present is a time for propagation of Islamic principles and ideals for which money, more than anything else, is urgently needed. The two verses (11, 12) equally are of general application.

4232. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that Muslims, by preaching Islamic ideals and principles to the world, will prosper and Islam will advance and make progress.

4233. Commentary :

Of the three religious groups among the Jews to whom Jesus preached his Message—the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes—Jesus belonged to the last, while he had not yet been commissioned as a Divine Preacher. The

Essenes were a highly religious and righteous people who lived away from the world's hustle and bustle, passing their time in meditation and prayer and in the service of humanity. It was from these people that most of Jesus's early followers came ("The Dead Sea Community" by Kurt Schubert and "The Crucifixion" by An Eye-Witness). They have been called "Helpers" by Eusephus.

The concluding words of the *Sūra* are indeed very prophetic. Throughout the ages the followers of Jesus have enjoyed power and precedence over their enemies—the Jews. They have founded and ruled over vast and powerful empires while the Jews have been a dispersed people so much so that "The Wandering Jew" has become a byword.

CHAPTER 62

SŪRA AL-JUMU'AH

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The *Sūra* takes its title from v. 10, wherein Muslims are enjoined to leave off all business when call is made for the Jumu'ah Prayer. It is a Medinite *Sūra* and seems to have been revealed several years after Hijra (see v. 3). In the previous *Sūra* Jesus's prophecy about the advent of the Prophet Aḥmad was mentioned. The present *Sūra* further deals with that prophecy.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* like its predecessor opens with the glorification of the Might and Wisdom of God, and, as a proof and demonstration of these two Divine attributes, points to the appearance of the Holy Prophet among the unlettered Arabs, who from an unlettered and uncultured people, became, through the teaching of the Qur'ān and the Prophet's noble example, the teachers and leaders of mankind, spreading light and learning wherever they went. The *Sūra* then refers to the same spiritual phenomenon through a great Deputy of the Holy Prophet—the Promised Messiah—and proceeds to condemn the Jewish people for their rejection of the Holy Prophet, in spite of the fact that their Scriptures abound in prophecies about him. Thus by implication the *sūra* warns Muslims against behaving like the Jews, when the Great Deputy appears among them. Towards the close of the *Sūra* importance of the Friday Prayer is emphasized and an implied hint is made that at the time of the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet which has been likened to the Friday Prayer, there would be a mad craze for trade, commerce, and worldly gains and many other diversions to amuse and turn men away from God, and Muslims are exhorted not to let these things distract them in the midst of their religious duties.

سُورَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٦٢)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah,^b the Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²³⁴

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكُ
الْقُدُّوسُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ②

3. He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered *people* a Messenger from among themselves^c who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they were before, in manifest misguidance;⁴²³⁵

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو
عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْ
حِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ
مُبِينٍ ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

^bSee 61 : 2.

^c3 : 165; 7 : 158; 9 : 128.

4234. Commentary :

The verse speaks of four Divine attributes which specially concern the fourfold mission of the Holy Prophet, mentioned in the next verse.

4235. Commentary :

For *الأميين* see 3 : 76 & 7 : 158.

The Divine mission of the Holy Prophet consisted in the performance of the fourfold sacred duty referred to in the verse under comment. This was the noble task which was to be entrusted to that great Prophet for whose appearance among the unlettered Arabs the Patriarch Abraham had prayed several thousand years in advance, when in company with his

son, Ishmael, he was raising the foundations of the Ka'ba (2 : 130).

In fact, no Reformer can truly succeed in his mission unless he prepares, by his noble and purifying example, a community of sincere, devoted and righteous followers, whom he teaches the ideals and principles of his Message and their philosophy, significance and importance, and then sends them out to preach that Message to other people. The training he imparts to them refines their intellect, and the philosophy of his teaching engenders in them certainty of faith, and his noble example creates in them purity of heart and refines character. It is to this basic fact of religion that the verse under comment refers.

4. And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.⁴²³⁶

5. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of immense grace.⁴²³⁷

6. The likeness of those who were entrusted with the *law of Torah*, but did not carry out its commandments, is as the likeness of an ass carrying a *load of books*. Evil is the likeness of the people who reject the Signs of Allah. And Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.⁴²³⁸

وَأَخْرَيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ

الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤٠﴾

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ

الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤١﴾

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا

كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالًا بِئْسَ مَثَلُ

الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي

الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

4236. Commentary :

The verse signifies that the Message of the Holy Prophet was meant not only for the Arabs among whom he was raised but for all non-Arabs as well, and not only for his contemporaries but also for the coming generations till the end of time. Or the meaning may be that the Holy Prophet will be raised among another people who have not yet joined his immediate followers. The reference in the verse and in a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet is to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah in the Latter Days. Says Abū Hurairah: "One Day we were sitting with the Holy Prophet when *Sūra Jumu'ah* was revealed. I asked the Holy Prophet, "Who are the people to whom the words *And among others from among them who have not yet joined them*, refer. Salmān the Persian was sitting among us. Upon my repeatedly asking him the same question, the Prophet put his hand on Salmān and said, 'If Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man from these would surely find it' (Bukhārī). This *ḥadīth* shows that the verse applies to a man of Persian descent. Now, the Promised

Messiah, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, was of Persian descent. Other sayings of the Holy Prophet speak of the appearance of the Messiah at a time when there would remain nothing of the Qur'ān but its words and of Islam but its name *i.e.*, the true spirit of Islamic teaching will be lost. (Baihaqī). Thus the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* both seem to agree that the present verse refers to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah

4237. Commentary :

The verse refers to the good fortune of the people among whom the Holy Prophet will be raised for the second time in the person of one of his followers—the Promised Messiah.

4238. Important Words :

أَسْفَار (books) is the plural of سفر (*sifrun*) which is derived from سفر (*safara*). They say سفر الكتاب *i.e.*, he wrote the book. سفر means, a book; a large book; a writing (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse contains an implied warning to Muslims not to reject the Promised Messiah

7. Say, 'O ye who are Jews, if you claim you are the friends of Allah to the exclusion of *all* other people, then wish for Death, if *indeed* you are truthful'.⁴²³⁹

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ
لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَتُّوا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ

صَادِقِينَ ۝

8. 'But they will never wish for it, because of that which their hands have sent on *before them*. And Allah knows well those who do wrong'.⁴²⁴⁰

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَ لَهُ أَبَدًا أَبَاقَدْ مَتَّ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَ

اللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ۝

9. Say, 'The Death from which you flee will surely overtake you.' Then will you be returned unto Him Who knows the unseen and the seen, and He will inform you of what you had been doing.'

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيكُمْ
ثُمَّ تَرُدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

R. 2 10. O ye who believe! when the call is made for Prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off *all* business. That is better for you, if you only knew.⁴²⁴¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ
الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ

خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

^a2 : 95.

^b2 : 96.

^c2 : 97; 4 : 79; 33 : 17.

like the Jews before them who had rejected the Holy Prophet.

4239. **Commentary :**

The verse shows that the Promised Messiah will challenge the Muslim *Ulema* who will reject his claim to *مباهلة* i.e., a prayer contest in which Divine curse is invoked against those who forge lies against God (3 : 62).

4240. **Commentary :**

The reference in the verse seems to be to those Muslim *Ulema* whom the Promised Messiah will invite to *Mubāhala*. Being convinced of the falsity of their position the *Ulema* will refuse to accept the challenge.

4241. **Commentary :**

In the previous verses mention was made of Jews who rejected the Holy Prophet's Message and who profaned their Sabbath and consequently incurred God's displeasure. In the present verse, however, Muslims have been enjoined to be particularly careful about the obligatory Friday Prayer. Every people has a Sabbath and the Muslim Sabbath is Friday. As soon as call for Prayer is made all business is to cease and the Faithful should attend the mosque to listen to the Leader's sermon (*khutbah*), which usually deals with some topical subject concerning the moral and social needs of the community and how to fulfil them.

11. And when the Prayer is finished, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's grace, and remember Allah much, that you may prosper^a.⁴²⁴²

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ⑪

12. But when they see some merchandise or amusement, they break up for it, and leave thee standing. Say, 'That which is with Allah is better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the Best Provider.'⁴²⁴³

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ
قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِوِ مِنَ
التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ⑫

^a3 : 192; 4 : 104; 8 : 46.

As the *Sūra* seems particularly to deal with the time of the Promised Messiah, the call for Friday Prayer may also signify his clarion call to Muslims to listen to his Message.

4242. Commentary :

Unlike Jewish or Christian Sabbath, the Muslim Sabbath is not a day of rest. Before the Friday Prayer and after it Muslims are exhorted to follow their daily avocations. The words "of Allah's grace," have generally been understood to mean "doing business and earning one's livelihood."

4243. Commentary :

It is apparent from v. 3, that the *Sūra*, parti-

cularly deals with the time of the Promised Messiah whose advent has been referred to as the advent of the Holy Prophet himself. The verse under comment shows that in the Messiah's time trade and commerce will engross people's attention and they will have little time to give to God Whom they will consign to complete oblivion. To add to man's forgetfulness of God, there will be all sorts of amusements, sports and pastimes to divert his attention from God. Muslims have been admonished in the verse not to neglect their spiritual well-being in the pursuit of material gains and sensuous pleasures.

CHAPTER 63

SŪRA AL-MUNĀFIQŪN

(Revealed after Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

The *Sūra* takes its name from the opening verse. It is a Medinite *Sūra*, having been revealed, as its subject-matter shows, sometime after the Battle of Uḥud which exposed the Hypocrites. Whereas the previous *Sūra* had specifically dealt with the Jews of Medina, this *Sūra* deals with other enemies of Islam—the Hypocrites.

At the very outset the *Sūra* exposes the infidelity and dishonesty of the Hypocrites and condemns their loud profession of faith as false and treacherous. They are, says the *Sūra*, the real enemies of Islam, as they try to deceive Muslims by their oaths and by their false profession of faith using them as a screen for that purpose. The *Sūra* further says that by their evil designs and nefarious activities the Hypocrites have condemned themselves beyond redemption. They have gone so far in mischief that God will not forgive them. They mistakenly think that, perhaps, like themselves, the Companions of the Holy Prophet are a band of self-seekers who will leave their Leader the moment their material interests so demanded. The *Sūra* closes with the exhortation to Muslims that instead of seeking to get any material benefit from the Holy Prophet, as the Hypocrites foolishly think, they should spend their wealth in the cause of God, before the time comes when Islam will no longer stand in need of the wealth of its followers.

سُورَةُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٦٣)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, 'We bear witness that thou art indeed the Messenger of Allah.' And Allah knows that thou art indeed His Messenger, but Allah bears witness that the Hypocrites are certainly liars.⁴²⁴⁴

3. They have made their oaths a shield; thus they turn *men* away from the way of Allah.^b Surely, evil is that which they have been doing.⁴²⁴⁵

4. That is because they *first* believed (and), then disbelieved.^c So a seal was set upon their hearts and *consequently* they understand not.⁴²⁴⁶

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ ②

اتَّخَذُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ③

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا فَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b9 : 9. ^c3 : 91; 4 : 138; 16 : 107.

4244. Commentary :

It is characteristic of a hypocrite that he makes loud profession of his faith and thus seeks to conceal the treachery and infidelity of his heart.

4245. Commentary :

The Hypocrites make loud professions of their faith and repeatedly declare on solemn oaths that they are sincere believers. This they do in order to hoodwink honest and unsuspecting believers into thinking that they are sincere and faithful

followers of Islam like themselves, and thus by winning the believers' confidence they seek to create mischief among them. This is how they make their oaths a screen for their wicked designs.

4246. Commentary :

The Hypocrites, the verse purports to say, appear to have lost all reason and understanding since they labour under the misconception that by their wiles and glib talk they can deceive Allah and His Prophet.

5. And when thou seest them, their figures please thee;^a and if they speak, thou listenest to their speech. *They are as though they were blocks of wood propped up.* They think that every cry is against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. Allah's curse be upon them! How are they being turned away from the truth!⁴²⁴⁷

6. And when it is said to them, 'Come,' that the Messenger of Allah may ask forgiveness for you,' they turn their heads aside, and thou seest them keeping back while they are big with pride.

7. It is equal for them whether thou ask forgiveness for them or ask not forgiveness for them.^c Allah will never forgive them. Surely, Allah guides not the rebellious people.⁴²⁴⁸

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُجَبِّكُ أَجْسَامُهُمْ وَإِنْ يَقُولُوا
تَسْمَعُ لِقَوْلِهِمْ كَانَهُمْ خَشَبٌ مُسْتَدَدٌ يُخَسَّبُونَ
كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرْهُمْ قَتَلَهُمُ
اللَّهُ أَنْ يَوْفُقُونَ ⑤

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
لَوَّارُءٌ وَسُهُمٌ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُمْ
مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ⑥

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ
لَهُمْ لَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ⑦

a2 : 205. b4 : 62. c9 : 80.

4247. Important Words :

مسندة (propped up) is derived from سند . They say سند اليه i.e., he leaned, rested or stayed himself against it or upon it. سند في الجبل means, he ascended the mountain. سند (sannada) means, he set up pieces of wood as stays or props against a wall; he wore or clad himself with garments called سند (sanadun). The word also means, a thing upon or against which one leans, rests or stays himself, or a person upon whom one leans; mountain slope (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In this verse the Hypocrites have been compared to blocks of wood propped up, or pieces of wood dressed up with clothes, which signifies that a hypocrite lacks self-reliance. He is

always in search of some person or thing upon which to rest or lean. Or the word may signify that his interior does not correspond to his exterior. He so conducts himself that while outwardly he appears to be a reasonable, dignified and honest person, inwardly he is quite hollow and rotten to the core. He seeks to please with his glib talk but, being a coward, he suspects danger in every crisis.

4248. Commentary :

The Hypocrites are the real enemies of Islam, much worse than the disbelievers (v. 5). By their secret wicked designs and machinations against Islam they irretrievably condemn themselves. As they have no faith, the verse says, asking forgiveness for them cannot benefit them in any way.

8. They it is who say, 'Spend not on those who are with the Messenger of Allah that they may disperse *and leave him*; while to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth; but the Hypocrites understand not.⁴²⁴⁹

9. They say, 'If we return to Medina, the one most exalted will surely drive out therefrom the one most mean,' while *true* honour belongs to Allah and to His Messenger and the believers; but the Hypocrites know not.⁴²⁵⁰

هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنْفِقُوا عَلَى مَنْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ
اللَّهِ حَتَّى يَنْفَضُوا ۚ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَايِنُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَكِنَّ ٱلنَّفٰقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۝

يَقُولُونَ لَئِنْ رَجَعْنَا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ لَيُخْرِجَنَّ ٱلْأَعَزُّ
مِنْهَا ٱلْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَلَكِنَّ ٱلنَّفٰقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

١
٥
١٣

4249. Commentary :

Insincere and dishonest himself, a hypocrite considers others to be like him. The verse points out that the Hypocrites of Medina had made an entirely foolish and wrong estimate of the sincerity of purpose of the Holy Prophet's Companions. They had quite a wrong notion that the Companions of the Holy Prophet had gathered round him from considerations of material interest, and that the moment they would find that their hopes had not materialised, they would desert him. Time completely belied their fond and futile expectations.

4250. Commentary :

In the course of a campaign, (probably the one against Banū Muṣṭaliq) 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, leader of the Medina Hypocrites, is

reported to have said that on his return he, "the most honourable of the inhabitants of Medina," would drive out therefrom "the meanest of them," meaning thereby that he would drive out of Medina the Holy Prophet, along with the entire band of his followers. 'Abdullah bin Ubayy was bitterly hostile to the Holy Prophet because his hopes of becoming the Chief of Medina were shattered by the Holy Prophet's arrival on the scene. Abdullah's son heard of this vile boast of his father, and as the party returned to Medina, he drew his sword and barred his father's entry into the town till he had confessed and declared that he himself was the meanest of the citizens of Medina and the Holy Prophet the most honourable of them. Thus his boast recoiled on his own head.

- R. 2 10. ^aO ye who believe! let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah.^a And whoever does so—it is they who are the losers.⁴²⁵¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ

الْخَسِرُونَ^{١٠}

11. ^bAnd spend out of that with which We have provided you before death comes upon one of you and he says,^c ‘My Lord! if only Thou wouldst grant me respite for a little while,^e then I would give alms and be among the righteous.’⁴²⁵²

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ
الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ
قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُنُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ^{١١}

12. ^dAnd Allah will not grant respite to a soul when its appointed time has come; and Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.⁴²⁵³

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ^{١٢}

^a8 : 29; 24 : 38; 64 : 16; 102 : 2. ^b2 : 196; 9 : 34. ^c14 : 45. ^d71 : 5.

4251. **Commentary :**

The believers have been informed in this and the next verse that God demands from them the sacrifice of their wealth and offsprings in the cause of Truth, since it is sacrifice that distinguishes true believers from the Hypocrites.

4252. **Commentary :**

The verse exhorts believers to make the best of their opportunities to serve the cause of Truth with all the gifts that God had bestowed

upon them, before death comes upon them *i.e.*, before they lose the opportunity or the power to serve.

4253. **Commentary :**

The word *أجل* signifies a Divine decree, and the verse means that a people should make the best of their opportunities before the Divine decree comes into force; that is, because they will have outlived their usefulness, they would deserve to live no more.

CHAPTER 64

SŪRA AL-TAGHĀBUN

(Revealed after Hijra)

Date of Revelation and Context

As its contents show this *Sūra* was revealed at Medina. The time of revelation appears to be shortly after Hijra. It takes its name from v. 10.

The previous *Sūra* had closed on an exhortation to believers to spend liberally in the cause of Truth, out of what Allah had bestowed upon them, before it was too late and the day arrived when they would have to render an account of their deeds and actions to God. In this *Sūra* some description is given of the awful day, called the Day of Losing and Gaining. The believers are exhorted again with greater emphasis not to allow any considerations of ties of relationship to stand in the way of their resolve to spend their wealth in Allah's way.

Summary of Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the declaration that the whole creation proclaims the glory and greatness of God, to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and Who has power over all things. He created man and brought into existence the whole universe for his service and endowed him with great natural powers and faculties in order that he should achieve the object of his creation. Unfortunately, however, the disbelievers defy God's commandments and reject His Messengers, with the result that they incur Divine displeasure. They are told that they should make preparation for the Day when the loss resulting from disobedience of Heavenly Messengers will be brought home to them. Towards the end of the *Sūra* believers are told that they can make up for any remissness in the discharge of their obligations to God and man, by giving full obedience to the commandments of God and the behests of His Messenger, and by spending in the cause of Truth, out of the great gifts God has bestowed upon them, and that they should not allow any ties of relationship to stand in their way.

سُورَةُ التَّغَابُنِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٦٤﴾

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. ^bWhatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah; His is the kingdom and His is the praise, and He has power over all things. ⁴²⁵⁴

3. It is He Who has created you, but *some* of you are disbelievers and *some* of you are believers; and Allah sees what you do. ⁴²⁵⁵

4. He created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you^c and made your shapes beautiful, and to Him is the *ultimate* return. ⁴²⁵⁶

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ
وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢﴾

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَمِنْكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ
صُورَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤﴾

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b17 : 45; 24 : 42; 59 : 25; 61 : 2; 62 : 2. ^c3 : 7; 7 : 12.

4254. Commentary :

Every creature by discharging its allotted task punctually and regularly and thus fulfilling the object for which it has been created, declares God to be free from every defect, imperfection or impurity and to be its Master, Creator and Controller. See also 57: 2.

4255. Commentary :

God has provided to all men adequate powers and opportunities for moral and spiritual development but some of them, by their failure to make proper use of those opportunities, practically

refuse to acknowledge God's beneficence and disobey His laws and commandments, while others by employing them in the service of their fellow beings succeed in winning His pleasure.

4256. Commentary :

The universe is governed and controlled by fixed natural laws and man is not the victim of chance, but being the crown and acme of the whole creation he has been endowed with such powers and faculties as are suited to his position as God's vicegerent on earth: and because of these powers he will have to render to God an account of his deeds and actions.

5. He knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He knows what you conceal and what you disclose^a; and Allah knows well that which is *hidden* in the breasts.⁴²⁵⁷

6. ^bHas not the story reached you of those who disbelieved before? So they tasted the evil *consequences* of their conduct, and they had a painful punishment.⁴²⁵⁸

7. That was because their Messengers came to them with manifest Signs, but they said, 'Shall *mere* mortals guide us?' So they disbelieved and turned away, but Allah had no need of *them*; and Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.⁴²⁵⁹

8. Those who disbelieve assert that they will not be raised up.^c Say, 'Yea, by my Lord, you shall surely be raised up; then shall you surely be informed of what you did. And that is easy for Allah.'⁴²⁶⁰

يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُسْرُونَ
وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ فَذَاقُوا
وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُ كَانَتْ تَأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
فَقَالُوا أَأَبْشَرُ مِنْهُمْ قُلُوبًا فَكَفَرُوا وَتَوَلَّوْا
اِسْتَغْنَى اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ۝

زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُبْعَثُوا قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي
لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى
اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ۝

^a2 : 78; 16 : 20; 27 : 26.

^b40 : 22-23.

^c36 : 79-80; 46 : 18; 50 : 4.

4257. Commentary :

As man has to render an account of his actions to God, he must realise that God being the Creator and Controller of the universe, nothing is hidden from Him or can escape His notice. It is therefore futile on man's part to think that he can avoid or escape responsibility for his actions.

4258. Commentary :

See next verse.

4259. Commentary :

As man has been endowed with great faculties of head and heart and as he has to render an

account of his deeds in the life hereafter, God sent His Messengers to guide him to the goal of his life. But man, in his ingratitude and conceit, defies and opposes Divine Messengers, thereby incurring Divine punishment.

4260. Commentary :

Does man think (the verse seems to say) that there is no future life or that he has been endowed with great powers, attributes and faculties for nothing, or, does he imagine that he can escape responsibility for his actions? He is sadly mistaken if he so imagines. There is a life after death wherein "shall you surely be informed of what you did."

9. Believe, therefore, in Allah and His Messenger, and in the Light which We have sent down.^a And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.⁴²⁶¹

فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالنُّورِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْنَا وَاللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۙ

10. The day when He shall gather you, on the Day of Gathering, that will be the day of mutual loss *and gain*. And whoso believes in Allah and acts righteously—He will remove from them the evil *consequences* of their deeds^b and He will make them enter Gardens through which streams flow, to abide therein for ever. That is the supreme triumph.⁴²⁶²

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ لِيَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ التَّغَابُنِ
وَمَنْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ
سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

11. ^cBut *as to* those who disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these shall be the inmates of the Fire, wherein they shall abide; and an evil destination it is!

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

^a4 : 175; 7 : 158.

^b8 : 30; 48 : 6; 66 : 9.

^c2 : 40; 7 : 37; 22 : 58; 30 : 17; 78 : 29.

4261. Commentary :

النور (the Light) may mean, the light of revelation, or the wisdom, spiritual enlightenment and insight, and Divine knowledge and discernment, with which the Holy Prophet was specially gifted.

4262. Important Words :

التغابن (mutual gain and loss) is derived from غبن . They say غبنه *i.e.*, he deprived, cheated or made him suffer loss in selling or overcame him in buying and selling. غبن رأيه (ghabina) means, he was or became deficient in his opinion or judgment. غبن الشيء means, he was unmindful or neglectful of the thing. In view of the root-meaning of the word,

the expression يوم التغابن has been variously interpreted as: (1) The Day of mutual gain and loss *i.e.*, when believers will know what they had gained and disbelievers what they had lost. (2) The Day of the manifestation of loss *i.e.*, people will realize how far they had been deficient in the discharge of their duties to God and man and thus their loss will become manifest. (3) The Day when the inmates of Paradise will over-reach the inmates of Hell by the state of enjoyment in which the former will be and the punishment which the latter will experience. (4) The Day when believers will attribute defect or deficiency to the lack of wisdom of disbelievers in that they had preferred disbelief to belief (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab).

- 2 12. There befalls not any affliction but by the leave of Allah.^a And whosoever believes in Allah—He guides his heart *aright*. And Allah knows all things well.⁴²⁶³

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13. And obey Allah and obey the Messenger.^b But if you turn away, then Our Messenger is responsible only for the clear conveying of the Message.⁴²⁶⁴

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَمْرًا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلْغُ الْبَيِّنُ ﴿١٣﴾

14. Allah! there is no God but He; so in Allah let the believers put their trust.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. O ye who believe! surely among your wives and your children are *some who are* your enemies, so beware of them. And if you overlook and forgive and pardon, then surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²⁶⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَكُمْ فَأَحْذَرُوهُمْ وَإِنْ تَعَفَّوْا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

^a4 : 79.

^b5 : 93; 24 : 55.

4263. Commentary :

God controls the universe according to certain laws. When man contravenes any of these laws, he involves himself in trouble. But as God is the Creator of all natural laws and man's affliction is due to the contradiction of one or other of these laws or to one of God's special decrees, the trouble may be said to have emanated from Him or to have come into being by His leave.

4264. Commentary :

The best way to avoid being involved in miseries and misfortunes is to obey Allah and His Messenger—the laws of the *Shari'at* and

Divine natural laws, because man's troubles, as mentioned in the preceding *Sūra*, stem from the contravention of these laws.

4265. Commentary :

Whereas in the previous verses emphasis was laid on obedience to Allah and His Messenger, the present verse draws attention to the necessity of guarding against some of the things that militate against that obedience—our love for our near and dear ones. If we allow them to stand in the way of our loyalty to God and submission to Divine laws, they become our enemies whom we should specially guard against.

16. Verily, your wealth and your children are a trial;^a but with Allah is an immense reward.

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ
أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ①

17. So fear Allah as best you can, and listen, and obey, and spend *in His cause*; it will be good for yourselves. ^bAnd whoso is rid of the covetousness of his own soul—it is they who shall be successful.⁴²⁶⁶

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْجِعُوا وَاطِيعُوا
وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَيْخَ نَفْسِهِ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ②

18. ^cIf you lend to Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you, and will forgive you; and Allah is Most Appreciating, Forbearing.⁴²⁶⁷

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضْعِفْهُ لَكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ③

19. ^dThe Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise.

عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ④

^a8 : 29; 63 : 10. ^b59 : 10. ^c2 : 246; 57 : 12; 73 : 21. ^d6 : 74; 9 : 94; 13 : 10; 59 : 23.

4266. Commentary :

In the preceding verse believers were told that their wealth and their children would put their mettle to test, whether they would help in promoting the cause of Truth or would prove an impediment or hindrance. In the verse under comment they are told that they should obey all the commandments of the *Shari'at*, particularly they should not be hesitant when they are

called upon to make monetary sacrifice for the advancement of a good cause. Only that way lies success and prosperity.

4267. Commentary :

Spending one's wealth in the cause of God is tantamount to giving a loan to Him which the Bountiful and Appreciating God pays back manifold.

CHAPTER 65

SŪRA AL-TALĀQ

(Revealed after Hijra)

Date of Revelation and Context

The *Sūra* derives its title from the subject-matter of the opening verse. It was revealed at Medina, sometime in the 5th or 6th year of Hijra. The immediate cause of its revelation seems to be the divorce pronounced by 'Abdullah bin 'Umar against his wife during her monthly course, a procedure which the *Sūra* is intended to prohibit (Bukhārī).

In the preceding *Sūra* a note of warning was sounded against some of the wives and children of believers, as sometime they tend to become an impediment in the way of men wishing to make monetary sacrifice in the cause of Truth. This may possibly lead to estrangement between the husband and the wife and ultimately to divorce, or the divorce may result from incompatibility of dispositions or from some other cause. It was therefore necessary to lay down the correct procedure for divorce. This may be regarded as the immediate connection of this *Sūra* with its predecessor. But there also runs a deeper connection in the subject-matter of the Qur'ān as a whole. It is characteristic of the style of the Qur'ān that when any of its *Sūrās* deals with a particular subject in its opening verses, then in order to emphasize and impress the importance of that subject upon the mind of the reader, the *Sūra*, briefly but pointedly reverts to the same subject in its closing verses. The same procedure has been adopted in the Qur'ān as regards whole *Sūrās*. Thus some of the social and political problems which have been dealt with in detail in the opening Medinite *Sūrās* such as Al-Baqarah, Āl-'Imrān, Al-Nisā', have again been briefly treated in the last ten Medinite *Sūrās*. The subject of divorce with which this *Sūra* briefly deals has already been dealt with in detail in *Sūra* Al-Baqarah.

Summary of Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with the procedure to be adopted when a man intends to divorce his wife, and with the treatment to be extended to her after the divorce has been pronounced and she is waiting for her *'iddat* (period of waiting) to expire. It is enjoined that during this period she should be treated well and provided with all the necessities, commensurate with the financial resources of the husband. It is significant that four times in the course of five brief verses of the *Sūra* believers have been exhorted to observe fear of God in their dealings. This indicates that in the matter of divorce husbands are generally tempted to treat their divorced wives unjustly. Hence the injunction to observe fear of God.

From the subject of divorce the *Sūra* passes on to the subject of rejection of the Divine Message by disbelievers. There seems to exist a subtle connection between the two. Those who reject the Divine Message divorce themselves from the grace of God.

سُورَةُ الطَّلَاقِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٦٥﴾

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O Prophet! when you divorce women, divorce them for the *prescribed* period, and reckon the period;^b and fear Allah. Turn them not out of their houses, nor should they *themselves* leave unless they commit an act which is manifestly foul. And these are the limits *set* by Allah; and whoso transgresses the limits of Allah, he indeed wrongs his own soul.^c Thou knowest not; it may be that thereafter Allah will bring something new to pass.⁴²⁶⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ
لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ
لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ
يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ
مَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ لَا تَدْرِي
لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٥﴾

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b2 : 232-233. ^c2 : 230.

4268. Commentary :

This is one of those verses of the Qur'ān in which the address made to the Holy Prophet, is, in reality, meant for the believers. Since the Holy Prophet was debarred from divorcing any of his wives (33 : 53), the injunction is meant clearly for his followers.

The procedure of divorce given in this *Sūra* is as follows :

The first pronouncement of divorce should be in the interval between two monthly courses, during which the husband and wife should not have conjugal relations. This ensures that the

decision to divorce has not been taken hastily in a fit of anger or under the influence of some other momentary impulse but after cool and deliberate reflection. Moreover, a divorced wife is to remain in her house till the expiry of *'iddat* (the period of waiting) which extends over three courses.

The words "it may be that thereafter Allah will bring about something new to pass," signify that the above-mentioned procedure is enjoined because it is possible that during the period of waiting the causes of friction may wear out and reconciliation may take place between the estranged parties.

3. Then, "when they are about to reach their *prescribed* term, keep them with kindness, or put them away with kindness, and call to witness two just persons from among you ; and bear *true* witness for Allah. Thus is admonished he who believes in Allah and the Last Day. And he who fears Allah—He will make for him a way out,⁴²⁶⁹

4. And will provide for him from whence he expects not. And he who puts his trust in Allah—He is sufficient for him. Verily, Allah will accomplish His purpose. For everything has Allah appointed a measure.⁴²⁷⁰

5. And if you are in doubt *as to the prescribed period* for such of your women as have despaired of monthly courses, then *know that* the prescribed period for them is three months, and *the same is for* such as do not have their monthly courses yet. And *as for those* who are with child, their period shall be until they are delivered of their burden.^b And whoso fears Allah, He will provide facilities for him in his affair.⁴²⁷¹

فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ
فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوْيَ عَدْلٍ
مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَن
كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ
يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۝

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى
اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ
اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ۝

وَالَّذِي يَشِينُ مِنَ الطَّحِيضِ مِّن نِّسَائِكُمْ إِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ
فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَالَّذِي لَمْ يَحِضْنَ وَأُولَٰئِكَ
الْأَحْصَاءُ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَن يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ وَمَن يَتَّقِ
اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا ۝

a2 : 232.

b2 : 229.

4269. Commentary :

The two witnesses referred to in the verse are to be called when the wife is about to be divorced, or when and if she is taken back by her husband. See also 2 : 230-234. "A way out" may mean "a way out of the difficult situation in which both the wife and the husband are placed by their apparently irreconcilable differences.

4270. Commentary :

The verse means that if differences

between husband and wife are due to the poverty of the husband, God will provide for him from sources he never could imagine, provided he fears Allah and honestly wishes to tide over the difficult situation.

4271. Commentary :

The words "if you are in doubt" have been added because the stoppage of monthly course may be due to some disorder in the womb or to some other cause, though menopause may not yet have arrived.

6. That is the command of Allah which He has sent down to you. And whoso fears Allah—He will remove the evil *consequences* of his deeds and will enlarge his reward.⁴²⁷²

7. Lodge divorced women during the prescribed period in the houses wherein you dwell, according to the best of your means; and harass them not that you may create hardships for them. And if they be with child, spend on them until they are delivered of their burden. "And if they give suck to the child for you, give them their due recompense, and consult together in kindness; but if you meet with difficulty from each other, then another woman shall suckle the child for him (the father)."⁴²⁷³

8. ^bLet him who has abundance spend out of his abundance. And let him whose means of subsistence are straitened spend out of what Allah has given him. Allah burdens not any soul beyond that which He has bestowed upon it. Allah will soon bring about ease after hardship.

ذَلِكَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ أَنْزَلَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَكْفِرْ
عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا ①

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِنْ وَجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تَضَارَّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتٍ
حَمْلٍ فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتَّى يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ فَإِنْ
أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَاتِمُّوا بَيْنَكُمْ
بِعُرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاَسَرْتُمْ فَمُتْرَضِعٌ لَهُ أُخْرَى ②

لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِنْ سَعَتِهِ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ
رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا
إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا سَيِّجَعُلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ③

a2 : 234.

b2 : 234.

4272. Commentary :

In the brief space of five verses the believers have been enjoined to fear God. This shows that in the matter of divorce men may be generally tempted to deal unjustly with their divorced wives and thus deprive them of their just rights. It was in the fitness of things that they should have been warned against falling a victim to this temptation.

4273. Important Words :

وجدكم (your best means) is derived from وجد which means, he found or he got. The three forms of the word وجد i.e., wajdun or wijdun or

wajdun mean the same thing i.e., ampleness of means; capacity; riches or wealth. They say هذا من وجدى i.e., it is within my capacity (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In this verse all the possible needs of a divorced woman have been adequately met. In her 'iddat a divorced woman is to be looked after by the husband with the same care and consideration as when she was the mistress of his house, according to the best of his means, till she leaves the house and is free to adopt the way of life she chooses.

- 2 9. "How many a city rebelled against the command of its Lord and His Messengers, and We called it to severe account, and punished it with dire punishment!"⁴²⁷⁴

10. So it tasted the evil *consequences* of its conduct, and the end of its affair was ruin.⁴²⁷⁵

11. Allah has prepared for them a severe punishment; so fear Allah, O ye men of understanding, who have believed. ^bAllah has indeed sent down to you a Reminder—

12. A Messenger, who recites unto you the clear Signs of Allah, that he may bring those who believe and do good deeds out of every *kind of* darkness into light.^c And whoso believes in Allah and does good deeds—He will make him enter Gardens, through which rivers flow, to abide therein for ever. Allah has indeed made excellent provision for him.

وَكَايْنٍ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ
فَحَاسِبْنَهَا حَسَابًا شَدِيدًا وَعَذَّبْنَاهَا عَذَابًا ثَقِيلًا ①

فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَاقِبَةُ أَمْرِهَا
خُسْرًا ②

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَدْ أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ
ذِكْرًا ③

رُسُولا يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مُبَيِّنَاتٍ لِّبُخْرَجِ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى
النُّورِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُدْخِلْهُ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
قَدْ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ لَهُ رِزْقًا ④

^a7 : 5-6 ; 21 : 12 ; 22 : 46 ; 17 : 18. ^b15 : 10 ; 36 : 70. ^c2 : 258 ; 5 : 17 ; 14 : 6.

4274. Commentary :

From the subject of divorce the verse makes a subtle diversion to the subject of defiance of God and His Messengers. In fact, in religious phraseology a woman is described as standing in the same relation to her husband as do the followers of a Prophet in relation to the Prophet. This comparison between the two relationships has been made quite clear in the last verse of *Sūra Al-Taḥrīm*, where disbelievers have been compared to the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot, and believers of different grades

of righteousness and spirituality to the wife of Pharaoh, and to Mary, mother of Jesus.

4275. Important Words :

وبال (evil consequences) is derived from وبل (evil consequences) is derived from وبل. They say وبل فلانا i.e., he beat such a one harshly and with consecutive strokes. وبلت السماء means, the rain fell in torrents. وبل الصيد means, he chased the hunt. وبال means, injury, damage; harshness; vexation; sin; punishment of sin. وويل means, dangerous, pernicious violent (Aqrah).

13. Allah is He who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof.^a The *divine* command comes down in their midst, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah encompasses all things in *His* knowledge.⁴²⁷⁶

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ
يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۝

^a67 : 4 ; 71 : 16.

4276. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that God's decree works in heavens and earth to the effect that His Messengers and their righteous followers are blessed with a Divine Light which guides them in their affairs and leads them to success and prosperity, while disbelievers suffer the evil consequences of their rejection of the Divine Message. In the preceding two verses a pointed

reference is made to this subject.

"Seven earths" may be the seven major planets of the solar system and seven heavens their orbits or ways as elsewhere so called in the Qur'ān (23 : 18). Or spiritually speaking "seven heavens" may signify seven stages of the spiritual development of man and "seven earths" those of his physical growth. For a detailed discussion of this subject, see 23 : 1-18.

CHAPTER 66

SŪRA AL-TAHRĪM

(Revealed after Hijra)

General Remarks

With this Chapter ends the series of Medinite *Sūrās* which began with *Sūra Al-Ḥadīd*. Its revelation may be assigned to the 7th or 8th year of Hijra and of a part of it to a later period, as the incident mentioned therein shows. The preceding *Sūra* had dealt with some aspects of *Talāq*—permanent separation between husband and wife. The present *Sūra*, however, deals with the subject of temporary separation, that is to say, with cases wherein a man, due to disagreement or conflict in domestic affairs temporarily gives up conjugal relations with his wife—or swears not to use a lawful thing. The *Sūra* takes its title from the opening verse.

Summary of Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with an injunction addressed personally to the Holy Prophet not to forbid himself the use of things which God has made lawful for him. The specific incident referred to in the opening verse indicates that due to misunderstanding, disagreement that may disturb, though temporarily, domestic harmony and peace, might sometimes arise in the otherwise most peaceful atmosphere of even a Prophet's household. The injunction, which applies to the Holy Prophet as much as to his followers, signifies that in such a case of temporary disharmony extreme measures should not be resorted to. The Holy Prophet's wives are further warned that they should never lose sight of the Prophet's very exalted status as God's Messenger and should not make demands from him which are inconsistent with his high station. The *Sūra* proceeds to tell believers to take care that members of their household do not deviate from the path of rectitude lest they might land themselves in trouble, and that if they happen to err or falter they should make proper amends and repent truly and sincerely, so that they might deserve Divine grace and mercy. As the *Sūra* opens with the mention of an incident concerning relationship of the Holy Prophet with his wives, it ends fittingly with a simile, comparing disbelievers to the wives of Prophets Noah and Lot and believers, to the wife of Pharaoh and to the pious and righteous Mary, mother of Jesus.

سُورَةُ التَّحْرِيمِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious the Merciful.⁴²⁷⁷

2. O Prophet! why dost thou forbid *thyself* that which Allah has made lawful to thee. Thou seekest the pleasure of thy wives? And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.⁴²⁷⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبْتَغِي

مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢﴾

^aSee 1 : 1.

4277. Commentary

See 1 : 1.

4278. Commentary :

It is related that one day one of the wives of the Holy Prophet gave him a drink made from honey, which he seemed to like. Some of his other wives, out of pique, pointed out to him that his breath smelt of *Maghāfir*, a shrub the taste of which resembled that of honey but having a bad smell. The Holy Prophet, because of his delicate nature, promised not to take honey any more (Buldān). It is to this incident that the verse under comment is generally taken to refer. But it seems improbable that the Holy Prophet, merely to satisfy the pique of his wife or wives, should have taken such a drastic step as to have forbidden himself the use of something which was lawful, particularly that in which, according to the Qur'ān, "there is cure for men" (16 : 70). It appears the narrator or narrators of this incident in the traditions suffered from some misunderstanding or confusion, particularly when, according to one tradition, the Holy Prophet took honey from the house of Zainab, and it were 'Ā'isha and Hafṣa who contrived to draw him into making the aforesaid promise, while, according to another tradition, it was at the house of Hafṣa that he was served with honey and that the wives who objected

were 'Ā'isha, Zainab and Ṣafiyya. It appears, moreover, that according to the *Hadīth*, two, or at the most three, of the Holy Prophet's wives were concerned in the incident, but, according to vv. 2 & 6 of the present *Sūra*, all were connected with it, two of them taking a leading part (v. 5). These considerations indicate that the *Sūra* refers to some incident of much greater significance than the mere taking of honey by the Holy Prophet at the house of one of his wives and of having been drawn into making a promise not to take it any more. In the commentary on this *Sūra*, Bukhārī (*kitāb al-Maṣālim wa'l Ghaṣb*) quotes Ibn 'Abbās as relating that he was always on the look-out to enquire of 'Umar as to who were the two wives to whom reference had been made in the verse : "Now, if you two turn unto Allah, it will be better for you, and your hearts are already so inclined." One day, finding 'Umar alone, he sought to satisfy his curiosity. He had hardly finished his question, says Ibn 'Abbās, when 'Umar said that they were 'Ā'isha and Hafṣa and then proceeded to relate the story : "Once, when my wife offered me her advice concerning some domestic affair, I curtly told her that it was no business of hers to advise me, for in those days we did not hold our women-folk in much respect. My wife sternly replied : 'Your daughter Hafṣa,

3. Allah has indeed allowed to you the dissolution of your oaths, and Allah is your Friend; and He is All-Knowing, Wise.⁴²⁷⁹

قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ
وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥٩﴾

takes so much liberty with the Holy Prophet that she retorts back, when he says something not to her liking till he feels offended, and you do not allow me to speak to you even about our domestic affairs.' Upon this I went to Ḥafṣa and sternly told her that she should not be misled by 'Ā'isha in this matter as she was nearer to the Prophet's heart. Then I went to Ummi Salma and had hardly broached the matter with her when she also curtly told me not to interfere in affairs concerning the Prophet and his wives. A short time after this, the Prophet separated himself from his wives and decided not to go to the house of any of them. The news went round that the Prophet had divorced his wives. I went to him and asked him if it was true that he had divorced his wives to which he replied in the negative."

This incident shows that 'Umar, and Ibn 'Abbās were of the view that the relevant verses of the *Sūra* referred to this temporary separation of the Holy Prophet from his wives. The fact that the preceding *Sūra* mentions the subject of *Talāq* which is separation of a permanent character, lends weight to the inference that these verses relate to the Prophet's separation from his wives, which, however, was of a temporary nature. Besides, as reported by 'Ā'isha in the above-mentioned *ḥadīth*, immediately after the period of separation was over, v. 33 : 29 was revealed, and the Prophet's wives were given the choice between the Prophet's companionship and a life of poverty and austere simplicity on the one hand, and separation from him with a life of ease and comfort and all sorts of material benefit on the other. The choice was

given to all the wives and the verse under comment speaks of *all* the wives, as also does v. 4. This shows that the incident referred to in these verses concerns all the wives in which two of them took a more prominent part. And this was when the Prophet's wives, led by 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa, demanded of him that like other Muslim women they should also have amenities of life and comfortable living (Faṭḥ Al-Qadīr). In this context the words *تبتغي مرضاة أزواجك* would seem to mean something like this : "Since thou always desirest to please thy wives and meet their wishes, they have been encouraged by this loving attitude of thine naturally to lose sight of thy high position as a Prophet of God and to make excessive demands on thee."

The alleged incident of Mary, the Copt, being too foolish and fantastic a concoction of Christian writers and lacking all reliable historical evidence, does not merit serious notice. Mary was the Holy Prophet's wedded consort and the respected mother of the Faithful. The Prophet never kept a slave girl.

o279. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet had severely taken to heart his wives' demand for amenities of life, and in order to show his extreme displeasure had sworn to keep away from them for one month. The verse under comment prescribes that a lawful thing does not become unlawful to a person merely by his swearing not to use it. In such a contingency he is required only to expiate his broken oath.

4. And when the Prophet confided a matter unto one of his wives and she then divulged it, and Allah informed him of it he made known to her part thereof, and avoided *mentioning* part of it. And when he informed her of it, she said, 'Who has informed thee of it?' He said, 'The All-Knowing, the All-Aware God has informed me.'⁴²⁸⁰

5. Now if you two turn unto Allah repentant, *it will be better for you*, and your hearts are *already* so inclined. But if you back up each other against him, surely Allah is his Helper and Gabriel and the righteous among the believers; and furthermore, angels too are his helpers.⁴²⁸¹

وَأَذْأَسَرَ النَّبِيُّ إِلَى بَعْضِ أَرْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا ۖ فَلَمَّا
نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ بَعْضَهُ وَ
أَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ
أَنْبَأَكَ هَذَا ۖ قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝

إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۚ وَإِنْ
تَظَاهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَ
صَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ۝

4280. Commentary :

It is difficult to say to what particular incident the present verse in fact refers. The reference which seems to be supported by the context may be to the incident described by 'Ā'isha herself, which is to this effect: When verse 33 : 29 was revealed, giving the Holy Prophet's wives a choice between his companionship and separation from him, by way of a reply to their demand for a life of comfort and ease, the Prophet first of all, broached the matter with 'Ā'isha (Bukhārī, *kitāb al-Maẓālim wa'l-Ghaṣb*). The Holy Prophet appears to have taken that course because it was 'Ā'isha who had led the demand along with Ḥafṣa, and it is not unlikely that 'Ā'isha passed on the Holy Prophet's secret communication to Ḥafṣa. Whatever the actual facts may be, the verse emphasizes the obligation of a person to whom a secret is confided not to divulge it, particularly when the parties concerned are husband and wife and the secret relates to a private domestic affair; or for that matter when they are a Prophet of God and one of his followers.

4181. Commentary :

The words "you two," seem to refer to 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa who led the demand for worldly comforts in their homes. All the wives of the Holy Prophet had, however, joined in the demand, though the leading part was taken by these two, and this, perhaps because they were daughters respectively of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, the two most respected among the Holy Prophet's Companions. See also v. 2 above.

The phraseology of the verse indicates that the matter referred to in these verses was of a very serious nature, but taking honey from the house of one's wife evidently is not so serious an affair as to have led to separation of the Holy Prophet from all his wives for nearly a month. Nor was the reprimand to the Prophet's wives implied in the words "Allah is his Helper and Gabriel and believers . . ." called for.

6. It may be that, if he divorce you, his Lord will give him instead wives better than you—resigned, believing, obedient, always turning to God, devout in worship, given to fasting, both widows and virgins.⁴²⁸²

7. O ye who believe! save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones^a, over which are appointed angels, stern and severe, who disobey not Allah in what He commands them and do as they are commanded.⁴²⁸³

8. ^bO ye who disbelieve! make no excuses this day. You are requited for what you did.

عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا
مِّنْكُن مَّسْلُومَاتٍ مِّمَّنِ تَتَّبِعُ تَبِيتَ عِيْدَتِ
سَبَّحْتَ ثِيْبَتِ وَأَبْكَارًا ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا
وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَظُ
شِدَادٍ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ
مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ②

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا
تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ③

^a2 : 25. ^b9 : 66; 77 : 37.

4282. Important Words :

سَائِحَات (given to fasting) is feminine of سَائِح which is plural of سَائِح which is act. part. from سَاح . They say سَاحَ فِي الْأَرْضِ i.e., he went through the land for the purpose of devoting himself to religious services. سَائِح means, one who (1) goes through the land as a devotee; or forsakes his home for the sake of God; (2) who observes the obligatory fasts; (3) one who fasts constantly (Lane & Aqrab).

ثِيْبَات (widows) is the plural of ثِيْب which is derived from ثَاب . They say ثَابَتَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ i.e., the woman became a ثِيْب which means, (1) a woman who has become separated from her husband by his death or by being

divorced by him; (2) one who is not a virgin; (3) a woman to whom a man has gone in; (4) a man who has gone in to a woman; (5) a person who has married, whether man or woman; (6) a woman who has attained the age of puberty, though a virgin. رَجُلٌ ثِيْبٌ , means a man who has been married to a woman (Lane & Aqrab.)

4283. Commentary :

As the *Sūra* deals particularly with domestic disagreements and conflicts, believers are enjoined to train and educate members of their household in such a way that there should reign complete harmony, peace and concord in the house as it prevails in Paradise.

- R. 2 9. O ye who believe! turn to Allah in sincere repentance. It may be that your Lord will remove the evil *consequences* of your deeds and make you enter Gardens through which rivers flow,^a on the day when Allah will not abase the Prophet nor those who have believed with him. Their light will run before them and on their right hands. They will say, 'Our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us; surely, Thou hast power over all things'.⁴²⁸⁴

10. O Prophet! strive hard against the disbelievers and the Hypocrites; and be strict against them; their resort is Hell, and an evil destination it is!⁴²⁸⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا
عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يَكْفِّرَ عَنْكُمُ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِيهِ
اللَّهُ الشَّيْءَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتِمِّمْ
لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاعْفُ عَنَّا إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ④

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ⑤

^a8 : 30; 48 : 6; 64 : 10.

4284. Commentary :

The never-ceasing desire for perfection on the part of believers in Paradise as expressed in the words, 'Our Lord perfect our light for us,' shows that life in Paradise will not be a life of inaction. On the contrary, spiritual advance in Paradise will know no end, for as the believers will attain excellence, characteristic of a certain stage, they will not stop at that, but seeing in front of it a higher stage of excellence and thus finding that the stage at which they had arrived was not the highest stage, will desire the attainment of the next higher stage, and so on without end.

In short the believers will go on making advancement in Paradise and shall never recede a step. Their activity far from ceasing will rather increase. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that in Paradise the believers will be imparted knowledge of new attributes of God which they will try to copy in themselves.

From the verse it further appears that after entering Paradise, the believers will seek *maghfirat*, i.e., "suppression of a defect." In this

sense of *maghfirat* the verse means that the righteous will be continually praying to God for the attainment of perfection and complete immersion in Divine Light. They will be continually going upwards and will regard each state as defective in comparison with a higher one to which they will aspire and will, therefore, pray to God to suppress the defective state that they may be able to get to the higher one. This is the true significance of *Istighfār* of which the literal meaning is, "asking forgiveness for one's lapses."

4285. Commentary :

Whereas, in the preceding verse it was stated that spiritual progress, not only in this world but in the life after death, is endless, in the verse under comment we are told that no advance is possible unless the disbelievers and the Hypocrites are strenuously striven against. Incidentally, the verse explains the real significance of *Jihād* which means, "striving against." Since the Hypocrites were regarded as part of the Muslim Community, *Jihād* in the sense of fighting with the sword was never waged against them.

11. Allah sets forth for those who disbelieve the example of the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two righteous servants of Ours, but they acted unfaithfully towards them. So they availed them naught against Allah, and it was said to them, 'Enter the Fire, ye twain, along with those who enter.'

12. And Allah sets forth for those who believe the example of the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the Garden; and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from the wrongdoing people.'

13. And the example of Mary, the daughter of 'Imrān, who guarded her chastity—so We breathed therein of Our Spirit—and she fulfilled in her person the words of her Lord and His Books and was one of the obedient.⁴²⁸⁶

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَاتِ نُوحٍ وَ
امْرَأَاتِ لُوطٍ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا
صَالِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتَهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّٰخِلِينَ ۝

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ
إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَ
نَجِّنِي مِنَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا
فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا
فِي وَكُتُبِهِ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقَانِتِينَ ۝

421 : 92

4286. Commentary :

In this and the preceding two verses, examples of the wives of the Prophets Noah and Lot, of the wife of Pharaoh, and the example of Mary, the mother of Jesus, are set forth. The disbelievers are compared to the wives of Noah and Lot in order to show that the companionship of a righteous man, even of a Prophet of God, does not benefit an evilly inclined person who is bent upon rejecting Truth. Prophet Noah's wife was of a more wicked disposition than the wife of Lot since the latter only preferred the company of her relatives to that of Lot, while Noah's son, probably under the corrupting influence of his mother, had rejected his father's Message.

The wife of Pharaoh stands for those believers who, though passionately desiring and praying to get rid of sin, yet cannot fully dissociate themselves from evil influences, represented by Pharaoh, and having arrived at the stage of the self-accusing soul (النفس اللوامة) sometimes fail and falter. Mary, the mother of Jesus, represents those righteous servants of God, who having closed all avenues of sin and having made peace with God, are blessed with Divine inspiration; the pronoun * (masculine gender) in فيه standing for such fortunate believers. Or, the pronoun may stand for فرج which, literally meaning a cleft or fissure, signifies an opening through which sin can find access.

CHAPTER 67

SŪRA AL-MULK

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

With this Chapter begins a series of *Sūrās*, extending to the end of the Qur'ān, which were revealed before Hijra, with the solitary exception of *Sūrā Al-Naṣr* which, though belonging to the Medinite period, was actually revealed at Mecca on the occasion of the Holy Prophet's Last Pilgrimage. The whole of the Qur'ān is God's own revealed Word and so is simply inimitable and inapproachable in subject-matter, style and diction, but the *Sūrās* revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Prophet's Call possess a majesty and grandeur, all their own. The beauty of rhythm and the charm of cadence of the revelation of this period are beyond human power adequately to describe. As these *Sūrās* generally deal with matters of belief and doctrine, *e.g.*, prophecies about the great and glorious future of Islam, existence of God and His attributes, Revelation, Resurrection, and Life after death, much symbolism has necessarily been used to describe the mystical and the spiritual in terms of what we can perceive by our physical senses. The *Sūra* belongs to the middle Meccan period—8th year of the Call being the approximate time when, according to competent authorities the *Sūra* was revealed.

Subject-Matter

As stated above, the Meccan *Sūrās* generally deal with matters of belief. The present *Sūra*, being the first of this series, naturally opens with proclaiming the Lordship, the Sovereignty, and the Almightyness of God, and as proof of these attributes adduces the fact that God is the Creator of life and death, and of the whole universe through whose component parts, from the smallest atom to the largest planet, there runs a wonderful and flawless design and arrangement. The creation of the universe and the beautiful order that pervades the cosmos, are proofs positive of the fact that God *is* and that He has created man to serve a sublime object and to achieve a noble goal. But man in his ingratitude has always rejected God's Message and consequently has been incurring Divine punishment.

The *Sūra* then proceeds to recount the manifold Divine blessings and favours without which man cannot exist for a single moment; it, then, by implication, calls upon him to make proper use of them for the realization of the purpose for which he is created. The *Sūra* closes with a beautiful homily, thereby bringing home to man the supreme truth that just as no physical life can exist without water, so spiritual life needs for its sustenance the heavenly water of Divine revelation.

سُورَةُ الْمُلْكِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٦٧)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.⁴²⁸⁷

2. ^bBlessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things;⁴²⁸⁸

3. Who has created death and life that He might try you^c—which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.⁴²⁸⁹

4. Who has created seven heavens in grades.^d No incongruity canst thou see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again: Seest thou any flaw?⁴²⁹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

قَدِيرٌ ②

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ

أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ③

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَا تَرَى فِي

خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوُّتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ

تَرَى مِنْ فُتُورٍ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b25 : 2-3. ^c5 : 49 ; 6 : 166 ; 11 : 8 ; 18 : 8. ^d65 : 13 ; 67 : 4 ; 71 : 16.

4287. **Commentary :**

See 1 : 1.

4288. **Commentary :**

The *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca when Islam was yet in its infancy and its enemies were straining every nerve to nip it in the bud. It opens with the mention of Divine attributes which are expressive of God's Power, Might and Majesty, and, appropriately the verse under comment implies a prophecy that the poor, persecuted and helpless Muslims would soon be granted the kingdom, not only of Arabia but of vast lands beyond its confines.

4289. **Commentary :**

The law of life and death works in all nature. Every living creature is subject to decay and death. Nations, like individuals, are subject to this inexorable law. The implication of the verse seems to be that with the advent of Islam God's decree has come into operation, that is to say that some nations will receive new life and others will decay and fall. This will

show that God is Mighty. The linking together of the attribute "Most Forgiving" with the attribute "Mighty" may imply that when Islam will triumph the enemies of the new Faith will be at the mercy of the Holy Prophet who will forgive them. The prophecy was fulfilled in the Fall of Mecca.

"Death," as in vv. 2 : 29 and 53 : 45, has been mentioned in this verse before "life." The reason seems to be that death or non-existence, is the state before life, or perhaps because "death" is more important and is of greater significance than "life," because, it opens to man the portals of everlasting life and unending spiritual progress, while his life on earth is only a temporary sojourn and a preparation for a permanent and everlasting life beyond the grave.

4290. **Important Words :**

طَبَقًا (in grades) is derived from طبق. They

5. Aye, look again, and yet again, thy sight will *only* return unto thee confused and fatigued.⁴²⁹¹

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ
خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ۝

6. And verily, We have adorned the lowest heaven^a with lamps, and We have made them *the means of* driving away satans, ^band We have prepared for them the punishment of the blazing Fire.⁴²⁹²

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا
رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ ۝

^a15 : 17 ; 37 : 7 ; 41 : 13 ; 50 : 7.

^b15 : 18 ; 37 : 11.

say أطبق الثوب *i.e.*, he folded together the piece of cloth. طبق means, a thing that is the equal of another thing in its measure so that it covers the whole extent of the latter like the lid; a layer of the earth; a fold; a generation; any of the stages of heaven. السماوات طباق means, the heavens are composed of stages, one above another (Lane & Aqrab).

تفاوت (incongruity) is derived from فات . They say تفاوت الشيطان *i.e.*, the two things were distinct or were different. تفاوت means, defect, fault, or imperfection; incongruity or discordance (Lane & Aqrab).

فطور (flaw) is derived from فطر . They say فطره *i.e.*, God created it or brought it into existence for the first time, it not having existed before. انفطر means, it became split, rent or cleft. فطور means, cleft; flaw; disorder (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Wonderful indeed is God's creation. The solar system of which our earth is but a small member is vast, varied and orderly and yet this system is but one of hundreds of millions of systems, some of which are incalculably larger than it, yet the countless millions of suns and stars are so arranged and distributed in relation

to one another as to produce everywhere harmony and beauty. The order that covers and pervades the universe is obvious to the ordinary naked eye, and is spread far beyond the range of disciplined vision, assisted by all the instruments and appliances which science and art have been able to invent (Flint).

4291. Important Words :

خاسأ (confused) is derived from خسا which means, he was or became vile, despised and hated. خاسأ الرجل الكلب means, the man drove away the dog. خسا البصر means, the eyesight became dazzled or confused and dim. خاسئى when applied to a dog or a swine means, driven away and repelled, and when applied to a man means, contemptible, despicable, vile or confused; and when applied to the eyesight means, dazzled or confused and dim (Lane).

4292. Commentary :

For a detailed note on the subject, briefly stated in this verse, see 15 : 17-19.

The word السماء (heaven) may also signify the spiritual firmament and مصابيح (lamps) Divinely-inspired Teachers and Reformers and شياطين may mean satanic people.

7. And for those who disbelieve in their Lord there is the punishment of Hell, and an evil resort it is!⁴²⁹³

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَبِئْسَ
الْمَصِيرُ ④

8. When they are cast therein, they will hear it roaring as it boils up.⁴²⁹⁴

إِذَا الْفُؤَادُ مِنْهَا سَبَّحُوا هَاشِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ⑤

9. It would almost burst with fury. Whenever a host of wrongdoers is cast into it the wardens thereof will ask them, 'Did no Warner come to you?'

تَكَادُ تَمَيِّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ
سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ⑥

10. They will say, 'Yea, verily, a Warner did come to us, but we treated him as a liar, and we said: 'Allah has not revealed anything; you are but in manifest error.'"

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا
نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

11. And they will say,^e 'Had we but listened or possessed sense, we should not have been among the inmates of the blazing Fire.'

كَبِيرٍ ⑦
وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ

12. Thus will they confess their sins; but far away are the inmates of the blazing Fire from God's mercy.⁴²⁹⁵

السَّعِيرِ ⑧
فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ⑨

^a11 : 107; 21 : 101; 25 : 13.

^b6 : 131 ; 39 : 72; 40 : 51.

^c25 : 28.

4293. Commentary :

When Divine Reformers appear in the world to remove distortions and interpolations that find their way into Heavenly Teachings, those who reject the Divine Reformers deserve and get God's punishment. This is mentioned by implication also in the preceding verse.

4294. Important Words :

شهيق (roaring) signifies the ending or final part of the crying or braying of an ass. It also

signifies a high sound; a cry of distress (Lane).

See also 11 : 107.

4295. Important Words :

سحق (be far away) is derived from سحق which means, it was or became distant or remote. سحقه means, he bruised or powdered or pulverized it; he destroyed it. سحق means, powdered, pulverized; distant, remote. سحق means, remoteness, curse; destruction (Lane & Aqrab).

13. "Verily, those who fear their Lord in secret—for them is forgiveness and a great reward.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ
وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ①

14. ^bAnd whether you conceal what you say or say it openly, He knows well what is in *your* breasts.

وَأَسْرَوْا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ
الصُّدُورِ ②

15. Does He Who has created *you* not know *it*? He is the Knower of all subtleties, the All-Aware.

مَنْ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ③

R. 2 16. He it is Who has made the earth even and smooth for you;^c so walk in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His provision. And unto Him will be the resurrection.⁴²⁹⁶

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي
مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ④

17. ^dDo you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not cause the earth to sink with you when lo! it begins to shake?⁴²⁹⁷

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمُ الْأَرْضَ
فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ⑤

18. Do you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not send against you a sand-storm? Then will you know how *terrible* was My warning.

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا
فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرِ ⑥

19. And indeed those before them also treated *My Messengers* as liars; then how *grievous* was My punishment!

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ⑦

^a21 : 50 ; 55 : 47 ; 79 : 41-42. ^b2 : 78 ; 6 : 4 ; 11 : 6 ; 20 : 8. ^c2 : 23 ; 20 : 54.

^d6 : 66 ; 16 : 46 ; 17 : 69 ; 34 : 10 ; 17 : 69.

4296. Commentary.

Journeying in the earth is recommended again and again in the Qur'ān, because leaving one's home and travelling to other lands and countries helps to add to one's knowledge and experience.

The verse also recommends making full use of mountains, which may also signify entertaining high ambitions and lofty aspirations, as the word *منكب* which also means a lofty place, suggests.

4297. Commentary :

It is because punishment is generally spoken of in the Qur'ān as coming down from heaven that God is referred to, here and in the next verse, as being in heaven; otherwise God is here, there and everywhere. "He is in the heaven and He is in the earth and He is where man is, even nearer to him than his jugular vein" (43 : 85; 50 : 17 & 57 : 4).

20. "Have they not seen the birds above them, spreading out their wings without moving *them* and then drawing *them* in to swoop down upon the prey? None withholds them but the Gracious God. Verily, He sees all things well.⁴²⁹⁸

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَافًى وَيَقْبِضْنَ
مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ^(١٠)

21. Or who is he that can be an army for you to help you against the Gracious God? The disbelievers are only in deception.⁴²⁹⁹

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُنْدٌ لَكُمْ يَنْصَرُّكُمْ مِّنْ
دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنِ الْكَافِرُونَ إِلَّا فِي غُرُورٍ^(١١)

22. Or who is he that will provide for you,^b if He should withhold His provision? Nay, but they obstinately persist in rebellion and aversion.⁴³⁰⁰

أَمَّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي يَزِدُّكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهُ
بَلْ تَجْأَوْنِىَ عُتُورٌ وَنُفُورٌ^(١٢)

23. What! is he who walks grovelling upon his face better guided or he who walks upright on the straight path?⁴³⁰¹

أَفَنَنْ يَبْشَىٰ مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّنْ يَمْشَىٰ
سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ^(١٣)

^a16 : 80. ^b10 : 32 ; 34 : 25.

4298. Commentary :

The verse as the context shows, refers, to Divine punishment that is in store for disbelievers. It purports to say that if they continue to oppose truth, they will be destroyed by famines, earthquakes and particularly by wars, and the birds of the skies will feast on their dead bodies. The Merciful God grants them respite that they might accept the Heavenly Message and save themselves from Divine punishment. See also 16 : 80.

4299. Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers that if on account of their persistent rejection of the Divine Message and opposition to, and persecution of, the believers they (believers) were allowed to take up

arms against them, their armies will be entirely helpless against Heavenly forces that would come to the help of believers.

4300. Commentary :

The reference may be to the terrible famine that held Mecca in its grip for several years till the Meccans begged the Holy Prophet to pray for their deliverance from the scourge. See also 44 : 13.

4301. Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers walk on the wrong path, hanging down their heads and grovelling in the darkness of doubt and disbelief, while believers, in the certainty of faith, go straight on the path of truth, holding their head high. Can the two be equal?

24. Say, 'He it is Who brought you into being, and made for you ears and "eyes and hearts; *but* little thanks do you give.'⁴³⁰²

25. Say, ^b'He it is Who multiplied you in the earth, and unto Him will you be gathered.'⁴³⁰³

26. ^c'And they say, 'When will this promise *come to pass*, if *indeed* you are truthful?'⁴³⁰⁴

27. Say, 'The knowledge *of it* is with Allah, and I am only a plain Warner.'^d

28. 'But when they see it nigh, the faces of those who disbelieve will become grief-stricken, and it will be said, 'This is what you used to ask for.'⁴³⁰⁵

29. Say, 'Tell me, if Allah should destroy me and those who are with me, or have mercy on us, who will protect the disbelievers from a painful punishment?'

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ
وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَلَنَارَاوَهُ زُلْفَةً سَيِّئَ وَجُوهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَقِيلَ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِی اللَّهُ وَمَنْ مَّعِيَ أَوْ
رَحِمَنَا فَمَنْ يُجِيرُ الْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

^a16 : 79 ; 23 : 79. ^b23 : 80. ^c21 : 39 ; 34 : 30 ; 36 : 49. ^d22 : 50 ; 26 : 116 ; 29 : 51.
^e21 : 40.

4302. Commentary :

Disbelievers are told that God has given them eyes to see so that they might benefit from the Signs He has shown in support of Truth. He has given them ears to listen the Divine Message. He has given them powers of mind that they might understand and realize the Divine Message. People do not make use of these God-given faculties and choose to welter in the quagmire of doubt; شكر (*shukr*) meaning to make proper use of a thing.

4303. Commentary :

Man has been created that he may lead a purposeful life on earth and may achieve

the grand object of his creation after which he will have to render an account of his deeds and actions.

4304. Commentary :

"This promise" may refer to the promise of Divine punishment made in 17—22 above.

4305. Commentary :

It is characteristic of disbelievers that as long as punishment does not overtake them, they boast and brag and hurl jibes and raileries at believers, but when they are face to face with it, they are seized with a sense of extreme frustration, dismay, and dejection.

30. Say, 'He is the Gracious God; in Him have we believed and in Him have we put our trust. And you will soon know who is in manifest error.'⁴³⁰⁶

قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ أَمَّا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا فَسْتَعْلَمُونَ
مَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

31. Say, 'Tell me, if *all* your water were to disappear *in the depths of the earth*, who then will bring you *pure* flowing water ?'⁴³⁰⁷

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ
يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَّعِينٍ ﴿٣١﴾

4306. Commentary :

The Divine attribute الرحمان (the Beneficent) has been repeatedly mentioned in the *Sūra* because all the Divine gifts and favours mentioned in it, whether pertaining to man's physical sustenance or his spiritual development, are the

direct result of God's beneficence (رحمانية).

4307. Commentary :

All life, whether physical or spiritual, depends on water,—the former on rain-water, and the latter on the water of Divine revelation.

CHAPTER 68

SŪRA AL-QALAM

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This *Sūra* is one of the first four or five *Sūrās* revealed at Mecca in the very beginning of the Call. According to some authorities it was revealed just after *Sūra* Al-‘Alaq which was the first Qur’ānic *Sūra* to be revealed, but some other authorities place it after *Sūrās* Muzzammil and Muddaththir. There, is, however, no doubt that all these *Sūrās* were revealed more or less in consecutive order because there exists a strong likeness in their subject-matter. The *Sūra* takes its title from the opening verse, and deals principally with the Holy Prophet’s claim as a Messenger of God.

Subject-Matter

Like the Meccan Chapters which mainly deal with matters of doctrine and belief, the present *Sūra* deals with the truth of the Holy Prophet’s claim, and gives sound and solid arguments in proof of it. After this a large part of the *Sūra* is devoted to a discussion of the fight of disbelievers against truth, and to the evil end to which they ultimately come, giving reasons why they reject Truth and why they strive and struggle against it, and how, when their efforts appear to be on the point of bearing fruit they come to nought, and Truth, instead of going under, begins to prosper, prevail and predominate. The *Sūra* further declares complete frustration and disappointment to be the lot of the disbelievers ; they burn in the fire of disgrace and humiliation. Towards the close, the Holy Prophet is enjoined to bear with patience and fortitude all the mockery, opposition, and persecution to which he was subjected, because his cause was bound to succeed.

سُورَةُ الْقَلَمِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By the inkstand and *by* the pen and *by* that which they write.⁴³⁰⁸

3. Thou art not, by the grace of thy Lord, a madman.⁴³⁰⁹

4. And for thee, most surely, there is an unending reward.⁴³¹⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ②

مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ③

وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b34 : 47 ; 52 : 30.

4308. Important Words :

واو (by), means, I swear; I cite as witness or evidence. For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths, see 37 : 2 ; 51 : 2 & 91 : 2.

Commentary :

In this verse the inkstand, the pen and all the written material is cited as evidence to support and substantiate the statement made in the next three verses.

4309. Commentary :

The verse means that by whatever test of knowledge and learning the claim of the Holy Prophet is examined, he will be found to be not a maniac, as the disbelievers say, but the sanest and the wisest of men. It further says that all other Divine Messengers were also stigmatised as lunatics because, in view of very heavy odds against them and of their own helpless weak position, their claim that despite the great power, prestige and resources of their

opponents they would succeed and their enemies would fail, appeared to the latter to be nothing better than the ravings of a madman. The next verse gives the reason why this charge is not only unfounded but also foolish and fantastic.

4310. Commentary :

This verse, along with the next, exposes the absurdity of the charge of madness. It purports to say that the actions of a madman produce no useful result, but that the Holy Prophet will eminently succeed in fulfilling the object of his Divine mission and in bringing about a wonderful revolution in the lives of his degenerate people. And this revolution will not end with his death. On the contrary, whenever in future his followers will deviate from the path of rectitude, God will raise among them Reformers who will regenerate them and will infuse in them a new life. And this process will continue till the end of time. This is the significance of the words, "and for thee is an unending reward."

5. And thou dost surely possess high moral excellences.⁴³¹¹

6. And thou wilt soon see and they too will see.

7. Which of you is afflicted with madness.⁴³¹²

8. Surely, thy Lord knows best those who go astray from His way,^a and He knows best those who follow guidance.

9. So comply not with the wishes of those who reject *the truth*.

10. ^bThey wish that thou shouldst be pliant so that they may *also* be pliant.⁴³¹³

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ خَلْقٍ عَظِيمٍ ⑤

فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُونَ ⑥

بِأَيِّكُمْ الْبَاقُونَ ④

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ

أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ⑧

فَلَا تُطِيعُوا الْكَذِبِينَ ⑨

وَدُّوا أَنْ تُدْهِنَ فَيُذْهِبَ اللَّهُ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ⑩

^a16 : 126 ; 53 : 31.

^b17 : 74 ; 56 : 82.

4311. Commentary :

This verse constitutes a further eloquent commentary on the charge of madness imputed to the Holy Prophet. It purports to say that the Prophet, not only is not a maniac but is the noblest and sublimest of men possessing in full measure all those moral excellences that combine to make their possessor a perfect image of his Creator. The Holy Prophet's humanity was of the most perfect character. He was a complete embodiment of all good moral qualities that a man is capable of possessing. It is to this aspect of the Holy Prophet's greatness that his talented wife, 'Ā'isha, referred, when, on being asked to shed some light on the Prophet's habits and morals she said *كَانَ خَلْقَهُ الْقُرْآنَ* i.e., he possessed all those moral excellences which are mentioned in the Qur'ān as the special marks of its true followers (Bukhārī). See also 20 : 2 & 33 : 22.

4312. Commentary :

The verse turns tables upon the accusers of the Holy Prophet, and tells them in challenging

words that time will show whether it was he or they who suffered from madness, or whether his claim to be God's Messenger was the outpouring of a heated brain, or whether they themselves were so demented as not to read the signs of time and thus refuse to believe in him.

4313. Important Words :

تدهن (thou shouldst be pliant) is derived from *دهن* which means, he was or became weak. *أدهن فلانا* means, he endeavoured to conciliate or make peace with such a one; he treated him with gentleness; he acted towards him with dishonesty or dissimulation; he pretended the contrary of what he concealed in his mind with regard to him; he strove to deceive him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse may have special reference to the offers which the Quraish of Mecca had made to the Holy Prophet in order to tempt him away from his fixed purpose, or it may possess general application, since Truth is as firm as rock

11. And yield thou not to any mean swearer,

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَهِينٍ ۝

12. "Backbiter, one who goes about slandering,"⁴³¹⁴

هَٰذَا زَمَّشَاءٌ يُنَمِّمُ ۝

13. ^bForbidder of good, transgressor, sinful,

مَتَّاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٌ ۝

14. Ill-mannered and, in addition to that, of doubtful birth.⁴³¹⁵

عُتِلَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٌ ۝

15. "This is because he possesses riches and children."⁴³¹⁶

إِنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ ۝

16. ^dWhen Our Signs are recited unto him, he says, 'Stories of the ancients!'

إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝

^a49 : 12 ; 104 : 2. ^b50 : 26. ^c23 : 56 ; 74 : 13-14. ^d8 : 32 ; 16 : 25 ; 83 : 14.

while falsehood has no legs to stand upon and gives way to pressure or temptation and is ready to make compromises.

belong. زَنِيم means, one adopted among a people to whom he does not belong, not being needed by them; base, ignoble, mean; the son of an adulteress or fornicatoress (Lane & Aqrab).

4314. Important Words :

نَمِيم (slander) is derived from نَم which means, he uttered calumny or excited discord. نَمِيم means, mischievous and malicious misrepresentation; calumny, slander (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in this and the three verses preceding it may be to Walīd bin Mughīra or Abū Jahl, etc. or to every leader of falsehood.

4315. Important Words :

عُتِل (ill-mannered) is derived from عَتَلَ ('atala). عَتَلَهُ means, he dragged him or drove him along roughly. عَتِل means, a great eater who refuses to give; gross, coarse, rough or rude person; low, ignoble; mean (Lane).

4316. Commentary :

The verse signifies that all sin, vice and opposition to Truth is born of conceit or false pride which are maladies of one who manages to amass great wealth and who wields great power and influence. Or, the verse, in conjunction with those preceding it, may mean that base and vile man should not be shown consideration or respect, simply because he happens to possess wealth and influence.

زَنِيم (of doubtful birth) is derived from زَنَم (zannama) and تَزَنَم is conjoining anyone with a people or party to which he does not

17. We will brand him on the snout.⁴³¹⁷

18. We will surely try them as We tried the owners of the garden when they vowed that they would certainly pluck *all* its fruit in the morning.⁴³¹⁸

19. And they made no exception and said not, 'If God please.'⁴³¹⁹

20. "Then a visitation from thy Lord visited it while they were asleep;"⁴³²⁰

21. And the morning found it like a garden cut down overnight.⁴³²¹

22. So they called to one another at the break of dawn,

سَنَسِبُهُ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ ①٤

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا

لَيَصْرُنَّ مِنْهَا مُصْبِحِينَ ①٥

وَلَا يَسْتَنْبِئُونَ ①٦

قَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ①٧

فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ ①٨

فَتَنَادَوْا مُصْبِحِينَ ①٩

43 : 118 ; 18 : 43.

4317. Commentary :

As, disbelievers, out of pride and a false sense of power reject the Divine Message, God will disgrace and humiliate them. "Branding on the snout" is a metaphor for disgracing a person.

4318. Commentary :

Here the base, greedy and conceited disbelievers have been compared to the owner of a garden who would devour all its fruit and would not allow any share to those who had also put in their labour in developing the gardens and would defraud them of their just rights.

4319. Important Words :

يَسْتَنْبِئُونَ (made no exception) is derived from نَبَى. They say اسْتَنْبَاهَ i.e. he excluded it or excepted it. الاستثناء in the case of an oath means, saying انشاء الله i.e., if God please (Lane).

Commentary :

The owners of the "garden" greedily devoured the fruit of the labour of others and fed fat on

it, excluding the latter from sharing it with them. Or, the verse may mean that they spent no part of their wealth for the benefit of their poor brethren. Or, it may signify that they were so sure of the successful outcome of their labours and were so certain of gathering in their harvest without any mishap that they completely forgot God, omitting to seek Divine protection by uttering the words "If God please."

4320. Commentary :

The verse means that Divine punishment overtook the "garden" in a sudden and swift sweep.

4321. Important Words :

الصَّريم (cut down) is derived from صَرَم. They say صَرَمَهُ i.e., he cut it, cut it through or severed it; or he ceased to associate with him. صَرِمَ means, cut off, cut through or severed; black land that does not grow anything; night; the dark night or a portion thereof. The words أَصْبَحَتْ كَاللَّيْلِ mean, it became burnt up and black like the night (Lane).

23. *Saying*, 'Go forth early in the morning, to your field, if you would gather the ~~fruit~~.

24. And they set out talking to one another in low tones,

25. *Saying*, 'Let no poor man today enter it against your *will*.'⁴³²²

26. And they went forth early in the morning, determined to be niggardly.⁴³²³

27. But when they saw it, they said, 'Surely, we have lost *our way*!

28. 'Nay, we have been deprived of all *our fruit*.'⁴³²⁴

29. The best among them said, "Did I not say to you, 'Why do you not glorify *God*?' "

30. *Thereupon*, they said, 'Glory be to our Lord. Surely, we have been wrongdoers.

31. Then some of them turned to the others, reproaching one another.

32. They said, 'Woe to us! We were indeed rebellious *against God*.

إِنْ اَعْدُوا عَلٰى حَرْبِكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰرِمِيْنَ ۝۳

فَاَنْطَلَقُوْا وَهُمْ يَتَخٰفَتُوْنَ ۝۳۱

اَنْ لَا يَدَّخُلَهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّسْكِيْنٌ ۝۳۲

وَعَدَا عَلٰى حَرَدٍ قٰدِرِيْنَ ۝۳۳

فَلَمَّا رَاَوْهَا قَالُوْا اِنَّا لَصٰلَتُوْنَ ۝۳۴

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُوْمُوْنَ ۝۳۵

قَالَ اَوْسَطُهُمْ اَلَمْ اَقُلْ لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُوْنَ ۝۳۶

قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَا اِنَّا كُنَّا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ۝۳۷

فَاَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ يَّتَلَاوَمُوْنَ ۝۳۸

قَالُوْا يٰوَيْلَنَا اِنَّا كُنَّا طٰغِيْنَ ۝۳۹

4322. Commentary :

The rich owners of the "garden" in the parable are compared to those selfish, cruel and greedy persons who, besides exploiting the labour of others, are so stingy that they do not spend any part of their ill-gotten gains for the needy and the poor.

4323. Important Words :

حرد (*hardun*) infinitive noun from حرد (*harada*) which means, he tended, repaired, or betook himself; (2) he sought, pursued or desired; (3) he prevented, hindered, prohibited, de-

barred; (4) he separated himself from others or he forsook his people (Lane).

Commentary :

The exploiters of the labour of others are a class by themselves. They seek and scheme to debar the latter from the benefits of what they earn by the sweat of their brow. They revel in wealth, while the poor grovel in dirt and squalor before their very eyes.

4324. Commentary :

Sooner or later Nemesis overtakes these exploiters and their contrivances to deprive others of the fruit of their labour fail altogether in their purpose.

33. 'Maybe, *if we repent*, our Lord will give us instead *a better garden* than this; we do humbly entreat our Lord.'⁴³²⁵

عَسَىٰ رَبَّنَا أَن يُبَدِّلَنَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا
رَاغِبُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

34. Such is the punishment of *this world*. "And surely the punishment of the Hereafter is greater. Did they but know!"⁴³²⁶

كَذَٰلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

R. 2 35. ^bFor the righteous, indeed, there are Gardens of Bliss with their Lord.⁴³²⁷

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٍ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٧﴾

36. 'Shall We then treat those who submit to Us as We treat the guilty?

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

37. What is the matter with you? How judge ye!

مَا لَكُمْ تَفَهُؤَ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

38. Have you a Book wherein you read,

أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

39. That you shall surely have in it whatever you choose?⁴³²⁸

إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخْتَرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

^a13 : 35 ; 39 : 27. ^b13 : 30 ; 30 : 16 ; 68 : 35 ; 78 : 32-33. ^c32 : 19 ; 38 : 29 ; 45 : 22.

4325. Commentary :

The parable of the owners of the "garden" may apply also to the leaders of the Quraish who had made life very miserable for the poor Muslims. They were sternly warned that all their designs against Islam would come to nought and all their efforts would prove abortive and they would be deprived of all their gardens and 'fruit.' But those who turn to God with true repentance would be rewarded many times more than what they will lose.

4326. Commentary :

The verse speaks of two kinds of punishment. The punishment referred to in the preceding several verses in the words "such is the punish-

ment" is the chastisement which overtook the opponents of Islam in this life. Those of them who repented were received in God's grace and were blessed with worldly gifts many times more than what they had lost. But those who persisted in their opposition to Truth and died in disbelief, will have a great punishment in the Hereafter.

4327. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that while the rebellious owners of the "garden" (v. 18) will be deprived of it, the righteous believers will have "Gardens of Bliss" from their Lord.

4328. Commentary :

See next verse.

40. Or have you any covenant binding on Us till the Day of Resurrection that you shall surely have whatever you judge?⁴³²⁹

أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْتَانُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْغَةِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ إِنْ
لَكُمْ لِمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. Ask them which of them will vouch for that.

سَأَلَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَدْلِكَ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

42. Or have they any 'partners' of God? Let them, then, produce *those* 'partners' of theirs, if they speak the truth.

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فُلْيَا تَوَاشَرُكَاءُ بِهِمْ إِنْ كَانُوا
صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. On the day when the truth shall be laid bare and they will be called upon to prostrate themselves, they will not be able *to do so*.⁴³³⁰

يَوْمَ يَكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ فَلَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

4329. Commentary :

In vv. 36-39 above, it was stated that a person who severs all connection with God and defies and contravenes His laws, can never be treated like one who makes those laws a rule of life. Both these classes of men choose different ways of life and inevitably come to different ends. This is God's eternal and unchangeable law which cannot be altered to suit anybody's wishful thinking. Further, disbelievers were asked whether there was any authority in any revealed Scripture that they would be allowed to choose a way of life of their own liking and would escape the consequences of their evil deeds. In the present verse they are told that if they possess no Scriptural authority to support their foolish ideas, and if reason and logic too, do not support them, have they then taken a covenant from God which will remain in force till the Day of Judgment that they will have whatever they like and do whatever they like and yet not suffer the consequences flowing from their actions? If they think so,

the verse warns them, they are mistaken.

4330. Important Words :

يَكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ (truth shall be laid bare). They say قامت القوم على ساق *i.e.*, the people were or became in a state of distress. The Arabic idiom كشفت الحرب عن ساق means, the fight became vehement. الشدة ساق *i.e.*, severity or hardness, the expression كشف الامر عن ساق is explained as meaning, when the affair became distressful or when the truth of the matter was laid bare (Lane, Kashshāf and Baiḍawī). See also 27 : 45.

Commentary :

The verse may refer to the hardness and severity of the Day of Resurrection or to the lifting of the veil from all mysteries and coming to light of all secrets on that Day.

The words, "They will not be able to do so," signify that the guilty will not be able to make amends for their sins of omission or commission, the time for repentance having passed long ago.

44. Their eyes will be cast down,^a and humiliation will cover them; and they were indeed called upon to prostrate themselves when they were safe and sound, *but they obeyed not.*⁴³³¹

45. 'So leave Me *alone* with those who reject this word of *Ours*. 'We shall draw them *near to destruction* step by step from whence they know not.⁴³³²

46. 'And I give them respite; for My plan is strong.⁴³³³

47. 'Dost thou ask a reward of them that they are *as if* being weighed down by its burden?⁴³³⁴

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا
يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَلِيمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يَكْذِبْ بِهَذَا الْكِدِّ تَسْنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ
مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَغْرَمٍ مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

^a75 : 25-26 ; 88 : 3-4.

^b73 : 12 ; 74 : 12.

^c7 : 183.

^d7 : 183.

^e23 : 73; 52 : 41.

4331. Important Words :

ترهقهم (will cover them). رهقه means, it reached or overtook him or it; he followed him and was about to overtake him; it covered him or it. رهقت اثما means, I committed a sin. أرهقه عسرا means, debt covered him. أرهقه عسرا means, he constrained him to do a difficult thing (Lane and Aqrab).

Commentary :

When disbelievers were in full possession of all their faculties and were enjoying peace, prosperity and security, they defied and violated Divine laws, but when, on the Judgment Day punishment will stare them in the face, they will beg to be allowed to repent and make amends, but then it will be too late.

4332. Commentary :

The verse shows that Divine punishment will overtake disbelievers by degrees and in stages and thus they will have ample opportunities to repent

and make amends by accepting the Message of the Qur'ān. The punishment began with the Battle of Badr and reached its culmination in the Fall of Mecca, extending over a period of about eight years.

4333. Commentary :

God grants respite to sinful people in order that they might repent and give up their evil ways. He is not in a hurry to punish because they are within His control and in His grip and cannot evade or elude the mills of God, which grind slowly but grind exceedingly small.

4334. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that God has granted respite to disbelievers that they may listen to and accept the Message of the Prophet who asks for no reward from them, but, on the contrary, actuated by sincere sympathy and solicitude for their spiritual well-being, preaches the Divine Word to them and suffers hardships for their sake.

48. "Have they *the knowledge of the unseen* so that they write it down?⁴³³⁵

49. So be thou steadfast in *carrying out the command of thy Lord*, and ^bbe not like the Man of the Fish when he called *to his Lord* and he was full of grief.⁴³³⁶

50. ^aHad not a favour from his Lord reached him, he would have surely been cast upon a bare tract of land, while he would have been held to be blameworthy *by his people*.⁴³³⁷

51. But his Lord chose him and made him *one of the righteous*.

52. And those who disbelieve would fain have dislodged thee *from thy God-given station* with their *angry looks* when they heard the Reminder; and they say, 'He is certainly mad.'⁴³³⁸

53. Nay, it is naught but *a source of honour for all the worlds*.⁴³³⁹

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

فَأَصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

لَوْلَا أَن تَذَرَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَاجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

^a52 : 42.

^b21 : 88; 37 : 141.

^c21 : 89 ; 37 : 144-146.

4335. Commentary :

The disbelievers do not know what is in store for them—what is and what is not good for them. The unseen has been revealed to the Prophet only. This is another reason why they should accept his Message.

4336. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is here comforted not to lose patience or give way to disappointment just because his people do not believe in him and oppose him. The time was fast approaching when they will listen, and give their allegiance, to him.

4337. Commentary :

The verse may also imply a subtle hint to the Holy Prophet's *Hijra* (Migration) to Medina.

4338. Commentary :

The verse appears to say to the Holy Prophet that disbelievers cast severe looks at him that might frighten a person of a lesser calibre into giving up his mission, but he has a Divine Message to deliver to the world and so he can hardly be intimidated into yielding to such pressure tactics. They call him a madman. But far from this, his Teaching contains the quintessence of wisdom; through it not only his own people—the Arabs—would be lifted from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest summits of greatness and glory, but it would also cleanse other peoples, freeing them from moral blemishes and raising their spiritual stature (v. 52).

4339. Commentary :

See the preceding verse.

CHAPTER 69

SŪRA AL-HĀQQAH

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

The *Sūra*, like its predecessor, was, as its subject-matter shows, among the earliest Chapters revealed at Mecca. It is almost devoted to the subject of inevitability of the Resurrection; and adduces the sure and certain success of the Holy Prophet against heavy odds as an argument in support of that hypothesis. As the Holy Prophet's ultimate success, and the Resurrection were regarded by the disbelievers as impossible, the coming to pass of the one did indeed constitute an incontrovertible proof that the other would also happen. Thus the *Sūra* opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that enemies of Truth shall be routed, and disbelievers are warned that if they did not desist from their evil course, they will be punished like the people of Noah, the 'Ād and Thamūd tribes and the mighty hosts of Pharaoh. They "disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, so He seized them—a severe seizing." The *Sūra* draws a parallel between the destruction of the rejectors of Divine Message and the Resurrection, and proceeds to say that for disbelievers the "hour" of punishment will be most distressful and agonizing; for the believers it will be a time of perennial joy and happiness. The righteous servants of God "will have a delightful life in a lofty Garden," and the deniers of truth "will be seized, fettered and cast into Hell." The *Sūra* closes with a firm and emphatic declaration that both these events—the Resurrection and the success of the Prophet's cause, will most surely come to pass, because what the Prophet says is God's own revealed Word and not the bragging of a poet or the idle conjecture of a soothsayer, for, if he had forged a lie against God, he would have met with sure and violent death, because a forger is never allowed to prosper.

سُورَةُ الْحَاقَّةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٦٩)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."⁴³⁴⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. The Inevitable!⁴³⁴¹

الْحَاقَّةُ ②

3. What is the Inevitable?

مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ③

4. And what should make thee know what the Inevitable is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ④

5. *The tribe of Thamūd and the tribe of 'Ād treated as lie the sudden calamity.*⁴³⁴²

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادٌ بِالْقَارِعَةِ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1.

4340. **Commentary :**

See 1 : 1

4341. **Important Words :**

الحاقة (the Inevitable) is derived from حق which means, it was or became suitable to the requirements of wisdom, justice or truth; it was or became established as a fact. حق الامر means, he established it as a fact. الحاقة being syn. with حقيقة means, an inevitable event, reality or truth. See also 2 : 148, 181 ; 3 : 109 ; 23 : 63 ; 32 : 4 (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The word الحاقة having the sense of an established or inevitable fact, or a catastrophe which is sure to happen, or according to some authorities, the final overthrow of disbelief, the verse may refer to the Day of Judgment or to a calamitous event that would befall disbelievers. The calamitous event may particularly refer to the Fall of Mecca when Islam became firmly and finally established in Arabia and idol-worship disappeared from the land for all time. The

three brief opening verses of the Sūra embodied a great prophecy that the overthrow of disbelievers was inevitable. The inevitability of their doom was declared at a time when Islam was yet in its infancy and was fighting for its very existence. The Inevitable proved to be literally true, and thus set the seal on the inevitability of the Day of Judgment. See also 13 : 32.

4342. **Important Words :**

القارعة (the sudden calamity) is derived from قَرَعَ رأسه بالعصا i.e., he struck his head with a stick. قَرَعَ الباب means, he knocked at the door. القارعة means, a great calamity which strikes terror into the hearts of people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Whereas, in the preceding three verses, the inevitability of the doom in store for the opponents of the Holy Prophet was emphasized, in the verse under comment the case of the 'Ād and the Thamūd tribes is cited to warn them that they should learn a lesson from the evil fate of these peoples, who in the remote past, flourished in their neighbourhood.

6. "Then, as for Thamūd they were destroyed with a violent blast."⁴³⁴³

7. ^bAnd as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind,

8. Which God caused to blow against them for seven nights and eight days continuously, so that thou mightest have seen the people therein lying prostrate^c, as though they were trunks of palm trees fallen down.⁴³⁴⁴

9. Dost thou see any remnant of them?

10. ^dAnd Pharaoh, and those who were before him, and the overthrown cities *persistently* committed sins.⁴³⁴⁵

11. And they disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord^e, therefore He seized them—a severe seizing.

12. ^fVerily, when the waters rose high, We bore you in the boat,⁴³⁴⁶

فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِالطَّاغِيَةِ ④

وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ ⑤

سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَنِيَةً أَيَّامًا ⑥

حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُعْجَازُ ⑦

تَخِلْ عَاوِيَةَ ⑧

فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُمْ مِّنْ بَاقِيَةٍ ⑨

وَجَاءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهُ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتُ بِالْحَاظِئَةِ ⑩

فَعَصَوْا رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً ⑪

إِنَّا لَنَاطِقَاتُ الْبَاءِ حَمَلْنَكُمْ فِي الْجَارِيَةِ ⑫

^a41 : 18 ; 54 : 32.

^b41 : 17 ; 54 : 20.

^c54 : 21.

^d28 : 9 ;

^e73 : 17.

^f11 : 41 ; 54 : 14.

4343. Commentary :

طاغية having been derived from طغى which means, he exceeded the limits, signifies an extremely severe punishment. For the nature of the calamity which befell the tribe of Thamūd see 7 : 79 ; 41 : 18 & 54 : 32. It has been variously described in the Qur'ān as الصيحة (the violent cry); الرجفة (the earthquake); and الصاعقة (the thunderbolt). In fact it was a severe earthquake.

4344. Important Words :

حسوما (continuously) is derived from حسم . They say حسمه i.e., he cut it off entirely. حسمهم means, he caused them to perish completely. حسم في العمل means, he laboured hard and wearied himself with continuous work. حسمت الدابة means, I cauterized the beast by successive opera-

tions. الايام الحسوم means, evil or unlucky days that are consecutive or permanent, or days preventing good or prosperity; disastrous days (Lane & Aqrab).

صرعى (lying prostrate) is the plural of صرع which is derived from صرع . They say صرعه i.e., he threw him down on the ground. صريع means, thrown down or prostrated in the ground; affected with epilepsy or madness; slain. One would say رأيت شجرهم صرعى i.e., I saw their trees cut down (Lane & Aqrab).

4345. Commentary :

"The overthrown cities" were Sodom and Gomorrah. See also 11 : 83.

4346. Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to Noah's Flood.

13. That We might make it a reminder for you,^a and that retaining ears might retain it.⁴³⁴⁷

14. ^bAnd when a single blast is sounded on the trumpet,⁴³⁴⁸

15. And the earth and the mountains are heaved up and then are crushed in a single crash.⁴³⁴⁹

16. On that day will the *great* Event come to pass.⁴³⁵⁰

17. And the heaven will cleave asunder,^c and it will be frail that day.⁴³⁵¹

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكِرَةً وَتَعِيَهَا أذُنٌ وَأَعْيَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾

وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً ﴿١٥﴾

فِيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١٦﴾

وَانْشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ ﴿١٧﴾

^a29 : 16; 54 : 16. ^b18 : 100; 23 : 102; 36 : 52; 39 : 69; 50 : 21 ^c55 : 38; 84 : 2.

4347. Important Words :

تعيها (might retain it) is derived from وعى . They say وعى الحديث *i.e.*, he kept or retained the narrative in his mind or memory; he learned it by heart (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The various punishments which overtook disbelievers for their sins and opposition to Divine Prophets at different times have been mentioned as a standing and permanent reminder to those who defy God's laws and His Message, implying that opponents of the Holy Prophet would meet with no better fate if they did not repent and give up their evil ways.

4348. Commentary :

From this verse begins a description of the punishment that overtook the opponents of the Holy Prophet, namely, the fall of Mecca, their greatest stronghold and the centre of their power and glory. The Holy Prophet's march on Mecca was so swift and sudden that the Meccans were taken completely by surprise. It came, as it were, a bolt from the blue.

The description may equally apply to the Day of Resurrection, when with the blowing of the trumpet both the righteous and the guilty will stand before God's Great Judgment Seat to render an account of their actions and deeds.

4349. Commentary :

The verse may also signify that the whole of Arabia will be shaken from one end to the other ; leaders of Arab aristocracy and the common folk will feel the strong impact of the conquests of Islam and of the great and violent change it will bring about in their lives. الجبال may signify leaders of men and الارض common folk.

4350. Commentary :

On that day Mecca, the great centre of idol-worship in Arabia will fall. The great event referred to here is also mentioned in 56 : 2, along with the results that flowed from it.

4351. Important Words :

واهية (frail) is derived from وهي . They say وهي الشيئ *i.e.*, the thing became worn out and weak. وهي الحائط means, the wall was

18. "And the angels will be *standing* on the sides thereof, and above them on that day eight *angels* will bear the throne of thy Lord.⁴³⁵²

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَىٰ أَرْجَائِهَا وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ
يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَّةٌ ۝١٨

19. On that day you will be presented *before God*; and none of your secrets will remain hidden^{b, 4353}

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ۝١٩

^a39 : 76; 40 : 8. ^b4 : 43; 41 : 21.

about to fall. وهى الثوب means, the cloth was worn out. واهية means, weak, frail; broken or rent (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to some natural phenomenon which took the form of Divine punishment. Or the word السماء meaning the covering overhead, the verse may signify that the covering over the heads of disbelievers would cleave asunder, *i.e.*, with the Fall of Mecca their political power would vanish and no protection or asylum will remain for them except that they should join the fold of Islam,

4352. Important Words :

For عرش see 7 : 55, 10 : 4 and 20 : 6. The word represents God's transcendent attributes (صفات تنزيهية) which are His exclusive prerogative. These attributes are manifested through God's attributes of similitude (صفات تشبيهية) which have been described in the verse as the bearers of God's Throne.

Commentary :

God's attributes of similitude which have been described here as the bearers of the Divine Throne are رب العالمين *i.e.*, the Creator and Sustainer of the world; الرحمن *i.e.*, the Gracious, Who fulfils all the needs of man, even before he is born and without any effort on his part; الرحيم *i.e.*, the Merciful, Who causes man's

labours to produce the best possible results, and مالک يوم الدين *i.e.*, Master of the Day of Judgment, to Whom all will have to render an account of their actions. These are the basic Divine attributes by which the world subsists and which mainly concern man's life and destiny. In view of their majesty, awfulness and greatness these four Divine attributes will have double manifestation on the Day of Judgment. And as Divine attributes are manifested through angels, therefore, eight angels are mentioned to be the bearers of the Throne of God on that Great Day. Or the verse may signify that on the day of fall of Mecca the four basic Divine attributes will have double manifestation, as on that day the foundations of Islam, humanity's last and most perfect religious system, will be firmly laid and God's power and glory will be manifested through, and for the sake of, the Holy Prophet. The clause "the angels would be standing on the sides thereof" may also signify that when the heaven of Arabia would be cleft asunder *i.e.*, when old order will vanish, the angels of God will lay the foundation of a new and better one. Or the words may mean that when the heaven will be cleft asunder *i.e.*, when terrible punishment will overtake the Meccans, God's angels will take their stand on its sides in order to protect the Holy Prophet and the Muslims.

4353. Commentary :

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse signifies that on the day of Fall of Mecca

20. "Then, as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he will say, 'Come, read my record.'⁴³⁵⁴

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَآؤُمُ اقْرَءُوا
كِتَابِي ۝

21. 'Surely, I knew that I would meet my reckoning.'⁴³⁵⁵

إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلِقٌ حِسَابِي ۝

22. ^bSo he will enjoy a delightful life,

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ۝

23. ^cIn a lofty Garden,⁴³⁵⁶

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ۝

24. ^aWhereof clusters of fruit will be within easy reach.⁴³⁵⁷

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ۝

25. ^eIt will be said to the righteous believers, 'Eat and drink joyfully because of the good deeds you did in days gone by.'

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ
الْخَالِيَةِ ۝

^a17 : 72 ; 45 : 30; 84 : 8-9.

^b88 : 10 ; 101 : 8.

^c43 : 73 ; 88 : 11.

^d55 : 55 ; 76 : 15.

^e77 : 44.

falsity of the idolatrous beliefs and practices of the Meccans will stand completely exposed.

4354. Commentary :

Elsewhere in the Qur'ān (56 : 28) the righteous are called "fellows or companions of the right hand." To be given one's record in one's right hand is a Quranic metaphor for having passed the test successfully.

4355. Commentary :

The verse shows the firmness of the belief of the righteous believers in the Hereafter.

4356. Commentary :

This and the following several verses give a graphic description of the blissful life that the righteous would lead in Paradise. The blessings and gifts mentioned in these verses are physical representations in Paradise of actions and deeds the believers had done in the present life. Inci-

dentally, the verses may apply to the life of comfort and the joy and peace the followers of the Holy Prophet came to enjoy after they had conquered the vast fertile valleys of the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Those who used to live in miserable hovels and huts, became, in a few years, the dwellers of stately palaces.

4357. Important Words :

قطف (clusters of fruit) is plural of قطف (qit fun) which is derived from قطف. They say قطف الثمر i.e., he culled, plucked and gathered the fruit. قطف الشيء means, he took hastily the thing or snatched it. قطف means, a bunch of grapes; culled fruit (Aqrah).

Commentary :

Besides referring to the blessings and boons of Paradise, the verse may be taken also to refer to the worldly comforts that were at the disposal of the Holy Prophet's Companions.

26. "But as for him who is given his record in his left hand, he will say, 'O! would that I had not been given my record!⁴³⁵⁸

27. 'Nor known what my reckoning was!

28. 'O! would that *death* had made an end *of me*!⁴³⁵⁹

29. 'My wealth has been of no avail to me.

30. 'My power has gone from me.'

31. *The angels will be commanded,*
b'Seize him and fetter him,

32. 'Then cast him into Hell.

33. 'Then put him into a chain the length of which is seventy cubits;⁴³⁶⁰

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ ۖ فَيَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي

لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَابِيهِ ۚ

وَلَمْ أَدْرِمَ حِسَابِيهِ ۚ

يَلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَةَ ۚ

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيهِ ۚ

هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيهِ ۚ

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ۚ

ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ۚ

ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ۚ

^a56 : 42-43 ; 84 : 11-13. ^b76 : 5.

4358. Commentary :

To be given one's record in one's left hand, in Quranic terminology represents failure in a test. Elsewhere in the Qur'ān (56 : 42) the guilty have been described as "fellows of the left hand."

4359. Commentary :

Disbelievers would wish death to be the end of all things so that there should be no other life and no rendering of account of their actions before God.

4360. Commentary :

It has repeatedly been explained in the Qur'ān that life after death is not a new life but only an image and manifestation of the present one. In these verses the spiritual torture of the present world has been represented as a physical punishment in the next world. The chain to be put round the neck, for instance, represents the desires of

this world which keep a man's head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that will assume the form of a chain in the life to come. Similarly, the entanglements of this world will be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burning of this world will likewise appear as the flames of burning fire. The wicked man in fact has in this very world within himself a hell of his passions and inextinguishable desires; he feels the burning of that hell in the failures he meets with in this life. When, therefore, he will see a never-ending despair before him in the new world, his desires will assume the shape of burning fire.

The "securing" of the sinful with the chain of a length of seventy cubits reveals the same secret. The limit of man's age may generally be fixed at seventy, and a wicked person often lives up to that age in his wickedness. Sometimes, he even enjoys seventy years.

34. 'Verily, he did not believe in Allah, the Great,

35. "And he did not urge the feeding of the poor.⁴³⁶¹

36. "No friend, therefore has he here this day;

37. 'Nor any food save the washing of wounds,'

38. 'Which none but the sinners eat.'

2 39. But nay, I swear by all that you see,⁴³⁶²

40. And by all that you see not,

41. That it is surely the word brought by a noble Messenger;

إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسِيلٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

يَا كَلَّةَ إِلَّا الْخَاطُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

فَلَا أَقْسَمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

^a74 : 45 ; 89 : 19 ; 107 : 4.

^b43 : 68 ; 70 : 11 ; 80 : 38.

^c14 : 17 ; 78 : 25, 26.

excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years, during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal he wastes away in the entanglements of the world and in satisfying his sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and, therefore, in the next world the chain of desires which he indulged in for seventy years shall be embodied in a chain of a length of seventy cubits, every cubit representing a year, with which the wicked shall be fettered.

4361. Commentary :

The disbelievers did not befriend the poor and did not discharge their obligations to them. So they will have no friend at a time when they will stand in need of one on the Day of Reckoning, and will be given the washing of wounds to satisfy their hunger, because they did not feed the needy and the hungry in

this life; their acts of omission in this life will take the form of the punishment described in these verses in next life.

4362. Commentary :

The things which we see in the physical world *i.e.*, the visible facts of life, and the things which are hidden from our view *i.e.*, human reason and conscience, have been cited in the verses 38-39 as proofs to establish the Divine origin of the Qur'ān. Or the verses (38-49) may mean that the great Signs which disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time witnessed with their own eyes, and the prophecies about the bright future of Islam which yet await fulfilment constitute an irrefutable argument, that Qur'ān is God's own Word which He has revealed to His noble Prophet Muhammad. It deals with the hard facts of life and is not a poet's fond dream, nor the groping in the dark of a soothsayer. See also 26 : 225-227.

42. And it is not the word of a poet;^a little is it that you believe!

43. ¹Nor is it the word of a sooth-sayer; little is it that you heed!

44. *It is* a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

45. ^eAnd if he had forged *and attributed* any sayings to Us,^{4362-A}

46. We would surely, have seized him by the right hand,^{4362-B}

47. And then surely, We would have severed his life-artery,

48. And not one of you could have held *Our punishment* off from him.⁴³⁶³

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلٍ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَلَا بِقَوْلٍ كَاهِنٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿٢٤﴾

لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٥﴾

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

^a21 : 6 ; 26 : 225 ; 36 : 70 ; 52 : 31. ^b52 : 30. ^c40 : 29.

4362-A. Important Words :

اقاويل (sayings) is the plural of اقوال which is the plural of قول which is derived from قال which means, he said. يقول عليه means, he forged a lie against him (Aqrah).

4362-B. Important Words :

يمين (right hand) is derived from يمن . They say يمن الرجل *i.e.*, he came from the right side of the man. يمن الله فلاناً means, God made him blessed. يمن means, blessing, good luck; power, strength, right side (Aqrah).

4363. Commentary :

In vv. 38-39 above it was claimed that all visible and invisible things prove that the Holy Prophet is God's true Messenger and that the Qur'ān is God's revealed Word and not the imaginary flight of a poet's

mind or the wild conjectures of a diviner. In this and the preceding three verses another invincible argument is given to support his claim. The argument is to the effect that if the Holy Prophet had been a forger of lies against God, God's strong hand would have seized him by the throat and the Prophet would certainly have met with a violent death; his whole work and mission would have gone to pieces, because such is the fate of a false prophet. The claim and the arguments contained in these verses seem to be an exact reproduction of the following Biblical statement: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren (*i.e.* the Ishmaelites) like unto thee and will put My word in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak even that Prophet shall die" (Deut. 18 : 20).

49. And verily, it is a reminder for the righteous.⁴³⁶⁴

50. And surely, We know that there are some among you who reject *Our Signs*.

51. And, verily, it will be *a source of regret* for the disbelievers.⁴³⁶⁵

52. And surely, it is the true certainty.

53. "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great."⁴³⁶⁶

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَذِكْرٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُّكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾

^a56 : 75 ; 87 : 2.

4364. Commentary :

Only the righteous believers and those who have fear of God in their hearts will benefit by the arguments given in the above verse. Or the meaning is that the Qur'ān would prove a potent means of raising those, who would believe in it, to great eminence—the root word ذكر from which تذكرة is derived meaning eminence.

4365. Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers would some

day regret the rejection of the Message of the Qur'ān. Or it may mean that seeing the great boons and blessings bestowed upon Muslims as a result of following the teaching of the Qur'ān, disbelievers would regret their rejection of it.

4366. Commentary :

That the Qur'ān is God's revealed Word is certain truth which no honest man can deny. So, glory be to the Lord Who revealed it.

CHAPTER 70

SŪRA AL-MA'ĀRIJ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

The *Sūra* derives its title from the 4th verse. It was revealed at Mecca about the 5th year of the Call, not later than the close of the early Meccan period. Noldeke, Muir, and some other eminent authorities, assign this date to the revelation of the *Sūra*.

In the preceding *Sūra* the disbelievers were warned that the great Calamity (الْحَاقَّةُ) would soon overtake them if they did not repent of their sins and accept the Divine Message. The present *Sūra* opens with a mention of the disbelievers' demand, viz., when will the threatened punishment be? They are told that it would soon be upon them, nay, it is at their door, and that when it comes, it would be so overwhelming and devastating that it would cause the mountains to fly like flakes of wool, and that the disbelievers would wish to part with their near and dear ones—their wives, children and brothers—as a ransom for themselves. Then it would be too late to repent and they would burn in Hell-fire which would strip off their skins. But God's righteous servants will enjoy perfect happiness and security in "Gardens"—honoured and loved by their Lord.

Towards the close of the *Sūra*, disbelievers are told again, that the Muslims now being few in number, and weak, the disbelievers consider prophecies about the glorious future of Islam as only the dream of a visionary, but the time was fast approaching when, their eyes cast down, they would hasten to the Holy Prophet to accept Islam. Then they would realize to their shame and sorrow that what the Prophet had foretold about their eventual defeat was only too true.

سُورَةُ الْمَعَارِجِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. An inquirer inquires concerning the punishment about to befall^{b4367}

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ ②

3. The disbelievers, which none can repel.^c

لِلْكَافِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ ③

4. *It is* from Allah, Lord of *great* ascents.⁴³⁶⁸

مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ ④

5. The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day, the measure of which is fifty thousand years.⁴³⁶⁹

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ
مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b52 : 8; 56 : 2. ^c52 : 9; 56 : 3.

4367. Commentary :

"The inquirer" in the verse is taken by some Commentators to refer to Nadar bin Al-Hārith, or Abū Jahl. But it need not refer to any particular person. The disbelievers repeatedly had challenged the Holy Prophet to bring down upon them the threatened punishment (10 : 49; 21 : 39; 27 : 72; 32 : 29; 34 : 30; 36 : 49; 67 : 26). The demand was made in doubt and mockery. They had gone so far as to challenge the Prophet with the words, "O Allah, if this be indeed the truth from Thee, then rain down upon us stones from heaven or bring down upon us a grievous punishment" (8 : 33). The word "inquirer" may refer to all such questioners.

4368. Commentary :

The verse may mean that instead of demanding punishment the disbelievers should have accepted the Message of Islam and thus should have won the pleasure of God. Or it may mean that while the punishment that will overtake

disbelievers will be highly destructive, the ascent of the believers to heights of spiritual perfection will also be without end. Or the verse may signify that as the attributes of God are manifested in stages, the punishment of disbelievers will also come in stages. The verse may also signify that the day when disbelievers will receive the most humiliating punishment in the form of the Fall of Mecca will be the most auspicious day in the Holy Prophet's life—the day of his معراج (Ascension), when he will be at the height of his power.

4369. Important Words :

الروح (Spirit) means, the human soul; spirit; the vital principle; inspiration; revelation; Word of God; the Qur'an; angel Gabriel; joy; happiness; mercy of God, etc. (Lane & Aqrab):

Commentary :

الروح meaning human soul, the word may signify that development and progress of the

6. ^aSo be patient with admirable patience.⁴³⁷⁰

7. They see it to be far off,

8. ^bBut We see it to be nigh.

9. The day when the heaven will become like molten copper,

10. ^cAnd the mountains will become like flakes of wool,⁴³⁷¹

11. ^dAnd a friend will not inquire after a friend.

12. Though they will be placed in sight of one another, ^eand the guilty one would fain ransom himself from the punishment of that day by offering his children,⁴³⁷²

13. ^fAnd his wife and his brother,

فَأَصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَبِيلًا ۝٧

إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ۝٨

وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ۝٩

يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْهَيْلِ ۝١٠

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ۝١١

وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا ۝١٢

يُبَيِّنُ وَلَهُمْ يَوْمَذِ الْحُجُرِمُ لَوْ يَفْتَدِي مِنْ عَذَابِ

يَوْمَئِذٍ بَنِيهِ ۝١٣

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَأَخِيهِ ۝١٤

^a15 : 86. ^b17 : 52 ; 78 : 41. ^c20 : 106 ; 70 : 10 ; 101 : 6. ^d44 : 42; 69 : 36; 37 : 35-38.
^e5 : 37; 13 : 19; 39 : 48. ^f31 : 34; 80 : 37.

human soul will know no end. Or the verse may mean that Divine plans and programmes take thousands of years to mature. Or, the words "fifty thousand years" may have reference to the age of the world as estimated by some geologists from a study of the layers of earth. Or the reference may be to a specific cycle of fifty thousand years in which a great change was decreed to take place, because Divine prophecies have their fixed periods, epochs and cycles in which they are fulfilled.

4370. Commentary :

Divine prophecies sometimes take thousands of years for their fulfilment. The Holy Prophet is enjoined to bear with patience the mockery and jibes of disbelievers because the hour of their punishment is delayed in

order that they may have time to take heed, repent or make amends.

4371. Commentary :

In this age of atom and hydrogen bombs flying of mountains like flakes of wool, is not an impossible occurrence.

These verses may also have metaphorical reference to the Fall of Mecca.

4372. Commentary :

What an awe-inspiring picture of the Day of Judgment is given in these verses! Face to face with a calamity man is prepared to part with everything, even to sacrifice his dearest and nearest ones if only by doing so he can save his own skin.

14. And his kinsfolk who sheltered him,

15. And *by offering all* those who are on the earth, if *only* thus he might save himself.

16. But no! surely it is a flame of Fire,

17. "Stripping off the skin *even to the extremities of the body*."⁴³⁷³

18. It will call him who turned his back and retreated.

19. ^bAnd hoarded *wealth*, and held *it*.⁴³⁷⁴

20. Verily, man is born impatient and miserly.⁴³⁷⁵

21. ^cWhen evil touches him, he is full of lamentations,

22. But when good falls to his *lot*, he is niggardly.

وَفَصِّلَتِہَ الَّتِی تُوِیَہُ ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَنْ فِی الْاَرْضِ جَبِیْعًا ثُمَّ یُنْجِیْہُ ﴿١٤﴾

کَلَّا اِنَّہَا لَظُ ﴿١٥﴾

نَزَّاعَةً لِّلشَّوٰی ﴿١٦﴾

تَدْعُوْا مَنْ اَدْبَرَ وَتَوَلَّی ﴿١٧﴾

وَجَمَعَ قَاوُغٰی ﴿١٨﴾

اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوْعًا ﴿١٩﴾

اِذَا مَسَّہُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوْعًا ﴿٢٠﴾

وَ اِذَا مَسَّہُ الْخَیْرُ مُنُوْعًا ﴿٢١﴾

^a74 : 30.

^b9 : 34 ; 53 : 35 ; 104 : 3.

^c33 : 20.

4373. Important Words :

الشَّوٰی (extremities) is derived from شَوٰی (shawa). They say شَوٰی اللحم *i.e.*, he roasted meat. شَوٰی means, the arms or hands and the legs or feet, or the fore and hind legs and the extremities collectively; (2) the head of a human being or the bone above the brain. It is also the plural of شَوَاةٌ which means, the skin of the head in which grow the hair (Lane & Aqrab).

4374. Commentary :

Hoarding of wealth, and not spending it in the service or promotion of good causes is very strongly condemned in these verses.

4375. Important Words :

هَلُوْعًا (impatient & miserly) is derived from هَلَعٌ which means, he was or became agitated, restless, seized with abject discouragement; he became hungry. هَلُوْعٌ means, one who becomes restless and easily agitated and discouraged when in difficulty; one who is greedy about wealth and miserly in spending it; one who is much grieved and loses patience when in trouble (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The words, "man is born impatient and miserly," mean that man by nature is impatient and miserly. For this meaning of خُلِقَ see 21 : 38 & 30 : 55.

23. Save those who pray.

إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. "Those who are constant in their Prayer,"⁴³⁷⁶

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. ^bAnd those in whose wealth there is a recognized right.^{4376A}

وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. For one who asks *for help* and *for one* who does not.⁴³⁷⁷

لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. "And those who believe in the Day of Judgment to be a reality,"⁴³⁷⁸

وَالَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord—

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. Verily the punishment of their Lord is not *a thing* to feel secure from—

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. ^dAnd those who guard their private parts—

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَفْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31. "Except from their wives and *from* those whom their right hands possess; such indeed are not to blame,"⁴³⁷⁹

إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32. ^fBut those who seek to go beyond that, it is these who are transgressors—

فَمَنْ ابْتَغَى وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33. ^gAnd those who are watchful of their trusts, and their covenants.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رِعُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

^a6 : 93 ; 23 : 10. ^b51 : 20. ^c37 : 53-54. ^d23 : 6. ^e23 : 7. ^f23 : 8. ^g23 : 9.

4376. Commentary :

Prayer is the best form of worship; it is an obligation which man owes to God, as "giving of wealth to the poor" is his obligation to his fellow-men. These two together constitute the quintessence of all religious teaching.

4376-A. Commentary :

This verse shows that all things in the universe being the common property of all mankind, there can be no absolute ownership of anything vesting in any individual, the poor having a share in the wealth of the rich as of right.

4377. Important Words :

المحروم may signify those persons who from a

sense of dignity or from some infirmity would not ask for alms. The word includes animals also in its signification.

4378. Commentary :

There could be no real sense of responsibility without a true and living belief in the Hereafter when man shall have to render account of his actions to his Lord and Creator. Belief in the Hereafter is the second cardinal belief of Islam, next to belief in the existence of God.

4379. Commentary :

For a detailed explanation of this verse see 23 : 7 and 24 : 34.

34. And those who are upright in their testimonies,

35. And those who are strict in the observance of their Prayer.

36. "These will be in the Gardens, duly honoured."⁴³⁸⁰

37. But what is the matter with those who disbelieve, that they come hastening towards thee,^b

38. From the right hand and from the left, in different parties?⁴³⁸¹

39. Does every man among them hope to enter the Garden of Bliss?

40. Never! We have created them of that which they know.⁴³⁸²

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

بِأُولَئِكَ فِي جَنَّتٍ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَمَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

عَنِ الْيَسِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ عِزِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَيَطْمَعُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

كَلَّا إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

^a18 : 108 ; 23 : 12.

^b14 : 43-44.

4380. Commentary :

These verses (vv. 24-35) mention those seven special marks of a true believer the possession of which leaves nothing to be desired and renders him fully deserving of the highest reward—the love and pleasure of God—which in the Qur'ān is termed as الفردوس (23 : 12) or الجنة (the Garden). See also 23 : 12.

4381. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse give a prophetic description of the coming triumph of Islam when the pagan tribes of Arabia, from every part of the country, hastened to wait in deputations upon the Holy Prophet, begging to be taken into the fold of Islam. Or the verses may refer to the highly alluring offers made by the leaders of the Quraish to the Holy

Prophet, if only he should give up preaching against their idols. By some authorities, however, the verses have been taken to refer to the dangerous attacks that were made on the Holy Prophet in different forms by his opponents.

4382. Commentary :

Taken along with its predecessor, the verse would mean that by mere expression of a pious wish a man cannot hope to be received into God's favour. He has first to discharge his obligations to God, and his fellow-beings, and by making full use of God-given powers and faculties he has to traverse all the different stages of spiritual progress before he can hope to enter "the Garden of Bliss." The word *ما* signifies natural powers and faculties with which God has endowed him.

41. But nay! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and of the Wests, that We have the power^{4382A}

42. To bring in their place others better than they, and We cannot be frustrated in *Our plans*.^{4382B}

43. "So leave them alone to indulge in idle talk and play until they meet that day of theirs which they are promised,⁴³⁸³

44. ^bThe day when they will come forth from their graves hastening, as though they were racing to a target,⁴³⁸⁴

45. Their eyes cast down, humiliation covering them^c. Such is the day which they are promised.⁴³⁸⁵

لَا أَقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ إِنَّا لَقَدِرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

عَلَى أَنْ نُبَدِّلَ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا مَأْخُذٌ بِسَبُوقَيْنِ ﴿٤٢﴾

فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوضُوا وَيَلْعَبُوا حَتَّى يُلَاقُوا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي يُوْعَدُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

يَوْمَ يُخْرِجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَانَهُمْ إِلَى نَصَبٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهُقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ

بِالَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

^a23 : 55 ; 43 : 84 ; 52 : 46.

^b36 : 52 ; 50 : 45 ; 54 : 8.

^c10 : 28 ; 54 : 8.

4382-A. Commentary :

See 37 : 6.

4382-B. Commentary :

The opponents of the Holy Prophet are told here that it is an unalterable Divine decree that Islam shall succeed and prevail in Arabia and that if they rejected it, other people would enter its fold and inherit God's blessings. The old order would change and from its ruins would emerge a new and better order.

4383. Commentary :

The expression, "that day of theirs which they are promised," means the day of the final triumph of Islam in Arabia and the complete defeat and discomfiture of disbelief—the day of the Fall of Mecca.

4384. Important Words :

اجداث (graves) being the plural of جدث

which means, a grave; a sepulchre (Lane), it stands here for the houses of the disbelievers who were spiritually no better than dead.

نصب means, a thing set up; a mile-stone; a goal or target (Aqrab).

Commentary :

See next verse.

4385. Commentary :

What a true and graphic picture of the leaders of the Quraish, after the Fall of Mecca, when they came to the Holy Prophet, completely dejected, dispirited and dismayed, their eyes cast down, and disappointment, and a sense of guilt and regret, writ large on their faces! They deserved very severe punishment, but the Holy Prophet forgave them out of magnanimity of heart which is unparalleled in history. not uttering even a word of reproach or taunt. That was their promised day—the day of their utter disgrace and humiliation.

CHAPTER 71

SŪRA NŪH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Context, and Date of Revelation

As the *Sūra* records the spiritual experiences of the Prophet Noah, it has been named after him. Wherry gives 7th year of the Call as the date of its revelation, while Noldeke places it in the 5th year but according to other authorities it was revealed in the first Meccan period, about the time when some of the immediately preceding *Sūrās* were revealed.

Towards the end of the preceding *Sūra* it was stated that wicked people invariably reject the Divine Message; they oppose and persecute God's Messengers till the hour of their punishment arrives, and they meet their deserved end. The present *Sūra* gives a brief account of the missionary activities of one of the great Prophets of antiquity—Noah—who was so bitterly and stubbornly opposed that he prayed to God: "Let not a single disbeliever remain alive in the land". A very destructive flood engulfed the whole country, bringing in its wake utter ruin and devastation.

Summary of Subject-Matter

Noah's account appears at several places in the Qur'ān—with some detail in *Sūra Hūd* (vv. 26—50). In the present *Sūra*, however, he pours out the agony of his heart before his Lord and Creator, in words full of extreme pathos. He preached to his people day and night, he says, and spoke to them in public and in private. He reminded them of the great favours and gifts that God had bestowed upon them. He warned them of the evil consequences of rejection of the Divine Message. But all his preaching and warning, his sympathy with and solicitude for, their well-being only met with ridicule, opposition and abuse; and instead of following one whose heart was full of love for them, they chose to follow those leaders who led them to destruction. When Noah's exhortations and preachings of a whole lifetime proved a voice in the wilderness, he prayed to God to ruin and destroy the enemies of truth. The *Sūra* closes with this prayer of Noah.

سُورَةُ نُوحٍ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. "We sent Noah to his people, saying, 'Warn thy people before there comes upon them a grievous punishment.'⁴³⁸⁶

3. "He said, 'O my people! surely I am a plain Warner unto you,

4. "That you serve Allah and fear Him and obey me."⁴³⁸⁷

5. 'He will forgive you your sins and grant you respite till an appointed time. 'Verily, the time appointed by Allah cannot be put back when it comes, if only you knew!'⁴³⁸⁸

6. He said, "My Lord, I have called my people night and day,

7. "But my calling *them* has only made them flee *from me* all the more.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ

قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ②

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ③

أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُوا ④

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ

مُسَمًّى إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ

تَعْلَمُونَ ⑤

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ⑥

فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا ⑦

^aSec 1 : 1.

^b11 : 26 ; 23 : 24.

^c7 : 60 ; 11 : 26 ; 23 : 24.

^d7 : 60 ; 11 : 27.

^e63 : 12.

4386. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet represented in himself all the Divine Messengers that had gone before him. The account given in this *Sūra* of the Prophet Noah applies with equal effect to the conditions and circumstances through which the Holy Prophet had to pass. It is in this light that the meaning of the *Sūra* should be read and appreciated.

4387. Commentary :

Observance of Divine laws, discharge of obligations due to God, and obedience to the commands and behests of His Prophets constitute the sum and substance of all religious teaching.

4388. Commentary :

When a Divine decree is in active operation, repentance is of no use.

8. "And every time I called them that Thou mightest forgive them, they put their fingers into their ears, and ^acovered themselves with their garments, and persisted in their iniquity, and were disdainfully proud.⁴³⁸⁹

9. "Then, I called them to righteousness openly.

10. "Then I preached to them in public, and admonished them in private.⁴³⁹⁰

11. ^b"And I said, 'Seek forgiveness of your Lord; for He is the Great Forgiver.

12. 'He will send down rain for you in abundance,

13. 'And He will grant you increase of wealth and children, and He will cause gardens to grow for you and will cause rivers to flow for you.

14. 'What is the matter with you that you expect not wisdom and staidness from Allah?⁴³⁹¹

15. "And He has created you in different forms and different conditions.⁴³⁹²

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ
فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَادَّاسْتَكْبَرُوا

اسْتِكْبَارًا ۝

ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جَهَارًا ۝

ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا ۝

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ۝

يُرْسِلُ السَّيَّاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مُمِذَّرًا ۝

وَيُبَدِّلْ لَكُمْ بَآمَوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّتٍ

وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا ۝

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ۝

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا ۝

^a11 : 6.

^b11 : 4, 53.

^c23 : 13-15 ; 40 : 68.

4389. Important Words :

For a detailed discussion of ثياب, see 74 : 5, and for استغشوا ثيابهم 11 : 6. The phrase استغشوا ثيابهم metaphorically means, they refused to listen to the Divine Message. They closed up all the avenues of their hearts against it.

4390. Commentary :

These verses signify that the Prophet Noah employed all means to make his people listen to the Divine Message. But they were equally determined not to listen to it.

4391. Important Words :

وقاراً (wisdom and staidness) is derived from وقر الرجل i.e., the man was or became grave, steady, wise, dignified, patient.

وقار means, wisdom, staidness, dignity, gravity; greatness (Aqrah).

Commentary :

God (said Noah to his people) had conferred innumerable blessings upon them, the greatest being that He raised among them a Prophet by following whose teaching they could achieve greatness, a place of dignity and respect among the nations of the world.

4392. Important Words :

أطوار (forms and conditions) is the plural of طور which, among other things, means, one time; quantity; measure; limit; state and condition; quality; capability; mode or manner. They say الناس أطوار i.e., mankind are of

16. "Have you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in *perfect* harmony,

17. ^bAnd has placed the moon therein as a light, and made the sun as a lamp?

18. "And Allah has caused you to grow as a *good* growth from the earth,⁴³⁹³

19. ^dThen will He cause you to return thereto, and He will bring you forth a *new* bringing forth.⁴³⁹⁴

20. "And Allah has made the earth for you a wide expanse

21. ^fThat you may traverse the open ways thereof.'

22. Noah said, "My Lord, they have disobeyed me,^g and followed one whose wealth and children have only added to his ruin.

23. "And they have planned a mighty plan.

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۝١٦

وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ

سِرَاجًا ۝١٧

وَاللَّهُ أَنْبَتَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ۝١٨

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ۝١٩

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ۝٢٠

لِتَسْلُكُوا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ۝٢١

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَمْ

يَزِدَّهُ مَالَهُ وَلُدَّةً إِلَّا خَسَارًا ۝٢٢

وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا كَبِيرًا ۝٢٣

^a65 : 13 ; 67 : 4.

^b10 : 6 ; 25 : 62.

^c7 : 26 ; 20 : 56.

^d7 : 26 ; 20 : 56.

^e: 23 ; 20 : 54 ; 67 : 16 ; 78 : 7.

^f21 : 32. ^g26 118; 54 10.

divers sorts, of different conditions and forms; of various dispositions; capabilities; in different stages (Lane & Agrab).

Commentary :

The verse may refer to the different stages and conditions of development through which the foetus passes—from the stage of a drop of sperm to that of a fully developed human being. This development of the foetus is fully described in 23 : 14-15.

The verse may also signify that God has endowed different persons with different natural capacities and capabilities and that on this disparity of aptitudes and physical conditions

depends the existence, growth and development of human society.

4393. Commentary :

The verse refers to the process of man's creation from the earliest stage when he lies dormant in the form of dust. The inorganic constituents of the earth, through a subtle process of change, become converted into the life-germ through the agency of food which man eats.

4394. Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the Resurrection. Man will get a new life in the Hereafter in which his works and actions done in this life will assume the form of rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell.

24. 'And they say to one another, 'Forsake not your gods.' And forsake neither Wadd* nor Suwa*, nor Yaghūth* and Ya'ūq* and Nasr*.⁴³⁹⁵

25. "And they have led many astray,^b so increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in error."

وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ۝

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا ۖ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ۝

a38 : 7.

b14 : 37.

4395. Important Words :

ود (Wadd) is derived from ود (Wadda). They say وده i.e., he loved him or it. ود (Wadd) was an idol worshipped by the tribe of Banī Kalab in Daumat al-Jandal. It was in a man's figure, representing manly power.

سواع (Suwā') is derived from ساع. They say ساع الشيئي i.e., the thing was wasted (Lane). سواع was an idol which the Banū Hudhail worshipped. It was in a woman's shape, representing female beauty.

يغوث (Yaghūth) is derived from غاث. They say أغاثه i.e., he aided or helped him. يغوث was an idol belonging to the tribe of Murād. Its votaries believed that it helped them when they called for help.

يعوق (Ya'ūq) is derived from عاق. They say عاقه عن كذا i.e., he hindered or prevented or withheld him from such a thing (Lane). يعوق was an idol belonging to the tribe of Hamdān. It was in the shape of a horse, representing swiftness. Its votaries believed that it prevented the enemy from doing harm to its worshippers, and warded off calamities from them.

نسر (Nasr) is derived from نسر. They say نسر الطير i.e., the bird tore it with its beak. نسر means, eagle or vulture (Aqrah). It was an idol of the Dhul-Kilā' tribe. It was in the shape of an eagle or vulture, representing long life or insight.

Commentary :

From time immemorial, man, in his ignorance, has worshipped forces of nature, idols made of wood or stone, and human beings. Noah's people were steeped in idol-worship. They had many idols, the five mentioned in the verse under comment being the most popular. The Arabs, several centuries afterwards, are supposed to have brought them from Iraq; Hubal, their most famous idol, was brought from Syria by 'Āmir bin Loḥay; their own principal idols being Lāt, Manāt and 'Uzzā. Or the Arabs might have named their own idols after the idols of the tribe of Noah as the two peoples were not very distant from each other and there was general intercourse between them. There is nothing impossible or improbable in the two neighbouring idolatrous peoples having identical names for their idols.

26. "Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter Fire. And they found no helpers for themselves against Allah.

وَمَنَّا خَطِيئَتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأَذْخَلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا
لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27. And Noah said, 'My Lord, leave not on the land a single dweller of the disbelievers;⁴³⁹⁶

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ
دَيَّارًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28. 'For, if Thou dost leave them, they will *only* lead astray Thy servants and will not beget but sinners and disbelievers.⁴³⁹⁷

إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرْهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوا إِلَّا
فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴿٢٨﴾

29. ^b'My Lord! forgive me and my parents, and him who enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and the believing women; and increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in perdition.'

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِمَن دَخَلَ بَيْتِيَ مُؤْمِنًا
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿٢٩﴾

^a21 : 78; 26 : 121; 37 : 83; 54 : 12-13. ^b14 : 42.

4396. Important Words :

ديار is derived from دار and means, one who lives in a house. They say دار ديار مافى الدار, there is no one in the house (Lane).

Commentary :

God's Prophets are full of the milk of human kindness. Noah's prayer shows that opposition to him must have been long, persistent and unremitting, and that all his efforts to bring his people to the right path must have been abortive, and that there had remained no possibility for any further addition to his small following, and also that his opponents must have exceeded all legitimate bounds in opposing and persecuting him and his followers, and in indulging in evil pursuits. Matters must have come to such a pass that a man of a compassionate disposition like Noah was constrained to pray against his people. In an identical situation the Holy Prophet's attitude to his opponents presents a vivid contrast. In the Battle of Uhud, the

Holy Prophet had two of his teeth broken. He was badly wounded and bled profusely, and yet the only words that escaped his lips on that occasion, were, "How will a people get salvation who have wounded their Prophet and have smeared his face with blood, for no fault but that he calls them to God. My Lord! forgive my people, they know not what they do" (Zurqānī & Hishām).

الأرض (the land) in the verse signifies Noah's own land—Iraq—and not the whole earth. This word has been used at several places in the Qur'ān in the sense of a particular land or country (5 : 27 & 28 : 82).

4397. Commentary :

Noah's prayer embodied in this and the preceding verse may be read as not against but for his people. Besides the meaning given in the text the prayer may signify that not a single disbeliever should remain in the land, i.e., all should become believers.

CHAPTER 72

SŪRA AL-JINN

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This *Sūra* is generally considered to have been revealed on the Holy Prophet's return from Ṭā'if, where, after he was despaired of the Meccans from whom he received nothing but ridicule, opposition and persecution, he had gone to preach his Message. The visit to Ṭā'if took place two years before Hijra when the opposition to the new Faith had taken an ugly turn and the condition of the Prophet and his followers had become desperate in the extreme. If, as some authorities are of the view, the *Sūra* relates to an incident other than the one mentioned in *Sūra Aḥqāf* (46 : 30-33), then it might have been revealed much earlier. The context and contents of the *Sūra* seem to lend some weight to the latter view.

Subject-Matter

In the preceding *Sūra* it was stated that the lifelong preaching of the Prophet Noah had met with only jibes and jeers, and that only a few persons other than his near relatives had given him their allegiance—his son and wife taking an active part in opposition to him. In order to show that there existed a similarity between the circumstances which Noah had to meet with and the circumstances which the Holy Prophet had to face, it is stated that a party of the *Jinn*,—a people not known to the Prophet before—visited him, listened to the Qur'ān and at once believed in him. The *Sūra* gives a fairly long account of the beliefs and doctrines of these people, their conduct and outlook on life. They denounce as an extravagant lie the doctrine that God can ever take unto Himself a son or a wife, and the *Sūra* gives strong arguments in refutation of this doctrine.

Next, the *Sūra* emphatically affirms that it is impossible for anyone to distort or tamper with the revealed Word of God because, like a precious treasure, it is strongly guarded by Divine sentinels. Towards the close of the *Sūra*, it is stated that whenever a Divine Teacher calls men to God, the forces of evil try to stifle his voice, but the Teacher carries on his mission, undeterred by the machinations of evilly disposed people. The *Sūra* closes with an infallible criterion to test the Divine source of the Message of a Prophet *viz.*, that it contains prophecies about great world events which human knowledge cannot foresee or foretell, and that the Prophet succeeds in delivering his Message because God "causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and after him."

سُورَةُ الْجِنِّ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Say, "It has been revealed to me that a company of the Jinn listened, and they said: 'Truly' we have heard a Qur'an that is wonderful".⁴³⁹⁸

3. "It guides to the right way; so we have believed in it, and we will not associate anyone with our Lord."⁴³⁹⁹

4. 'The truth is that the majesty of our Lord is exalted. He has taken neither wife nor son unto Himself.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْمَعَ لَفْظٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا

إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا ②

يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا

أَحَدًا ③

وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b 46 : 30.

^c 46 : 32.

^d 17 : 112 ; 18 : 5 ; 25 : 3.

4398. Important Words :

جن (*Jinn*) is derived from جن (*Janna*) which means, it veiled, concealed, covered or protected him or it. جن (*Jinn*) means, such beings as remain aloof from the people concealing themselves; strangers; the main or chief part or body of mankind, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 6 : 101, 129 and 27 : 18.

Commentary :

The reference in the words "a company of the Jinn" may be to a party of Jews of Naṣībīn. They were non-Arabs and being strangers they have been called جن (*Jinn*) which word among other things means, a stranger. The incident mentioned in the verse seems to be different from the one referred to in vv. 46 : 30-33, though the verse is taken by some authorities to refer to

those verses; the words put in the mouth of "a company of the Jinn" mentioned in the present verse having a seeming resemblance with the words spoken by "a party of the Jinn" referred to in vv. 46 : 30—33.

The word جن also meaning a large body of mankind, the verse may be taken as embodying a prophecy that at some time in future large numbers of men from among the powerful nations of the world will accept Islam.

4399. Commentary :

This verse shows that "a company of the Jinn" were either Unitarian Christians or such Jews, as were closely associated with Christians, or being under their influence, were conversant with Christian beliefs.

5. 'And that the foolish amongst us used to utter extravagant lies concerning Allah.⁴⁴⁰⁰

6. 'And we had thought that men and Jinn would never speak a lie concerning Allah.

7. "And indeed some men from among the common folk used to seek the protection of some men from among the Jinn, and they *thus* increased the latter in arrogance;⁴⁴⁰¹

8. 'And indeed they thought, even as you think, that Allah would never raise any *Messenger*.^{4401-A}

9. 'And we sought to reach heaven, but we found it filled with strong guards and shooting stars'.⁴⁴⁰²

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَفْعَلُ سَفِيهًا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا ۝

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَقُولَ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ

كَذِبًا ۝

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ

مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝

وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ۝

وَأَنَّا لَبَسْنَا السَّيَّءَ فَوَجَدْنَا مُلْأَةً حَرَسًا

شَدِيدًا وَشُهَبًا ۝

a6 : 129. b37 : 7-9 ; 15 : 17-19.

4400. Important Words :

شَطَطًا (extravagant lies) is derived from شَطَطَ (shatṭa) which means, he transgressed or acted wrongfully or unjustly; he exceeded the legitimate bounds; he became removed far away from the right path. أَمْرٌ ذُو شَطَطٍ means, an affair that is extravagant or exorbitant, or which exceeds legitimate bounds. شَطَطٌ means, enormity; enormous or extravagant lie (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

It appears from the relevant verses that "a company of the Jinn" were believers in Divine Unity.

4401. Important Words :

رَهَقًا (arrogance) is derived from رَهَقَ (rahiqa) which means, he was or became stupid and frivolous; he did wrong, abominable things; he told a lie. رَهَقٌ (rahqun) means, wrongdoing, injustice, tyrannical conduct; sin; levity; compelling or urging a person to do a thing which he is not able to do; folly; arrogance or

pride (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

As the word رجال is used only with regard to human beings, the verse shows that "a company of the Jinn," mentioned in this and in *Sūra Aḥqāf* were human beings and not any other species of creation. Moreover, جن here may signify big or influential men and انس lowly and humble ones who by following the former and seeking their protection increase their conceit and arrogance.

4401-A. Commentary :

The Jews had ceased to believe as early as in the time of the Prophet Joseph that no Divine Messenger would ever appear after him (40 : 35).

4402. Important Words :

حَرَسًا (guards) is derived from حَرَسَ which means, he guarded, took care; he stole or stole by night. حَرَسٌ (harasun) is the plural of حَرَسَ which means, a guard or guardian; a thief, used

10. 'And we used to sit in some of its seats to listen. But whoso listens now, finds a shooting star in ambush for him.⁴⁴⁰³

وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْتَمِعِ
الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَصَدًا ۝

11. 'And we know not whether evil is intended for those who are in the earth or whether their Lord intends guidance for them.⁴⁴⁰⁴

وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ
بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمُ رَشَدًا ۝

ironically because guardians are sometimes found to be thieves (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse shows that when a Divine Reformer is about to make his appearance in the world, an unusual shooting of stars takes place. It is to this exceptional natural phenomenon that reference is made in this verse.

"Seeking to reach heaven," means, trying to steal the secrets of the unknown. See next verse.

4403. Important Words :

رصد (in ambush) is noun-infinitive from رصد (raṣada). They say أرصده *i.e.*, he watched or waited for him; lay in ambush for him. مرصاد and مرصد and رصد all mean, a hiding place; an ambush. كان له بالمرصد or قعد له بالمرصد means, he lay in ambush for him. An Arab poet says: إن المنايا للرجال بمرصد *i.e.*, verily deaths are lying in ambush for men (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Before the appearance of a Divine Reformer, soothsayers and diviners dabble in occult sciences, and with the help of their questionable practices seek to hoodwink simple people by

posing to be able to have access to the secrets of the unknown, and as they are generally quite adept in the art of cheating they succeed in playing upon people's credulity. But with the advent of the Heavenly Reformer they are exposed and their counterfeit knowledge of the unseen becomes unmasked as only a superficial and fragmentary acquaintance with astrology. For a detailed explanation, however, of this and the preceding verse see 15 : 17-19 and 37 : 7-8.

The word الآن (now) is used here particularly with respect to the time of the Holy Prophet, but it may also signify the time of every great Divine Reformer.

4404. Commentary :

Whereas before the appearance of a Divine Reformer soothsayers and diviners ply their evil trade of prying into the unknown with impunity, with the appearance of such a one they practically confess their lack of knowledge of the unseen by giving up their evil practices. It is not given to these people to foretell what great changes in the world are decreed to take place. On the other hand, only God's great Messengers can foretell the future.

12. 'And some of us are righteous and some of us are otherwise; and we are sects following different paths.'⁴⁴⁰⁵

13. 'And we know that we cannot frustrate *the plan of Allah* in the earth,'^a nor can we escape Him by flight.

14. ^b'And when we heard the *Call to guidance*, we believed in it. And he who believes in his Lord has no fear of loss or injustice.

15. 'And some of us submit to God and some of us have deviated from the right course.' " And those who submit to God—it is these who seek the right course.

16. And as for those who deviate from the right course, they are the fuel of Hell.

17. 'And if they keep to the right path, We shall certainly provide them with abundant water to drink.'⁴⁴⁰⁶

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ الْكَافِرَاتِ

قَدَدًا^{١٣}

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نُّعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَن نُّعْجِزَهُ

هَرَبًا^{١٤}

وَأَنَّا لَتَا سِعِينَ الْهُدَىٰ أَمَّا بِهِ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ

بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا^{١٥}

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ

فَأُولَٰئِكَ نَحْرَوُا رَشَدًا^{١٦}

وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا^{١٧}

وَأَن لَّوِ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقِينَهُمْ مَّاءً

غَدَقًا^{١٨}

^a55 : 34.

^b46 : 32.

^c46 : 33.

4405. Important Words :

قَدَدًا (sects following different paths) is the plural of قَدَّة (qiddatun) which is derived from قَدَدَ . They say قَدَدَهُ i.e., he cut it or cut it entirely, rent it. قَدَدَ means, pieces of a thing; parties, divisions, sects or distinct bodies or classes of men, holding particular tenets or body of tenets, creeds, opinions. صَارَ الْقَوْمُ قَدَدًا means, the people became divided into their states or conditions and their desires or erroneous opinions (Lane & Aqrab).

4406. Important Words :

غَدَقًا (abundant) is infinitive-noun from غَدَقَ

(ghadiqa). They say غَدَقَتِ الْعَيْنُ i.e., the spring or fountain abounded with water. غَدَقَتِ الْأَرْضُ means, the land abounded with herbage (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse points out that if people had accepted the Divine Message and had kept to the right path, God would have bestowed upon them worldly gifts and benefits in abundance. Water being the source of all life, "abundant water" signifies abundance of wealth and other material gains.

18. That We may try them thereby.
^aAnd whoso turns away from the remembrance of his Lord—He will drive him into an overwhelmingly severe punishment.⁴⁴⁰⁷

19. ^bAnd *all* places of worship belong to Allah; so call not on anyone beside Allah.^{4407-A}

20. ^cAnd when the Servant of Allah stands up praying to Him, they crowd upon him, well-nigh suffocating him.⁴⁴⁰⁸

21. Say, 'I pray to my Lord only, and I associate no one with Him.'^d

22. Say, 'I have no power to do you either harm or good.'

23. Say, 'Surely none can protect me against Allah, nor can I find any place of refuge besides Him.'

24. 'My responsibility is only to convey what is revealed to me from Allah, and His Messages.'^e And for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger there is the fire of Hell, wherein they will abide for a long, long period.

لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ وَمَنْ يُعْرِضْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ
 عَذَابًا صَعَدًا ۝۱۵

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا ۝۱۶

وَأَنَّهُ لَبَّائِقًا مَّعْبُدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يُكَفِّرُونَهُ
 عَلَيْهِ لَبَدًا ۝۱۷

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُوا رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا ۝۱۸

قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ۝۱۹

قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُخَيِّرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ ۚ وَلَنْ أَجِدَ
 مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا ۝۲۰

إِلَّا بَلَاغًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِسَالَةً ۚ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَ
 رَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۝۲۱

^a20 : 101 : 43 : 37. ^b2 : 115; 22 : 41. ^c96 : 10-11. ^d13 : 37 ; 18 : 39. ^e18 : 28. ^f4 : 15.

4407. Commentary :

Wealth is a source of great trial and temptation. Instead of being grateful to God for His bestowing riches upon them, wealthy people generally are neglectful of their duties to God and man.

4407-A. Commentary :

In the foregoing verses it is declared that with the advent of the Holy Prophet, God's plan with regard to the establishment of His Unity has become manifest. The verse under comment states that mosques would henceforth be the centres from which the light of Truth

will emanate and spread throughout the world.

4408. Important Words :

لَبَدًا (crowd upon him suffocating) is derived from لَبَدَ . They say لَبَدَ بِالْمَكَانِ i.e., he remained, stayed, continued to dwell in the house لَبَدَ الشَّيْءُ بِالشَّيْءِ means, the things became heaped one upon the other. لَبَدَ (labida) also means, he (a camel) became choked and suffered from a contortion in the chest and the throat (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

"The Servant of Allah" refers to the Holy Prophet, he being God's servant *par excellence*.

25. *"They will continue to disbelieve until they see that which they are promised, and soon they will know who is weaker as regards helpers and fewer as regards numbers."*⁴⁴⁰⁹

26. *"Say, 'I know not whether that which you are promised is nigh or whether my Lord has fixed for it a distant term.'"*⁴⁴¹⁰

27. *"He is the Knower of the unseen: and He reveals not His secrets to anyone,"*⁴⁴¹¹

28. Except to him whom He chooses, namely a Messenger of His. And then He causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and behind him,⁴⁴¹²

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ

أَضْعَفُ نَاصِرًا وَ أَقْلُ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾

قُلْ إِن أَدْرِيٓ أَقَرِّبُ مَا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ

رَبِّي أَمَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ

يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ﴿٢٨﴾

^a19 : 76.

^b21 : 110.

^c3 : 180.

These words may equally be applied to every Divine Messenger or Reformer. Whenever such a one calls men to God and invites them to give up their evil ways and adopt the path of virtue and righteousness, the sons of darkness place all sorts of obstacles and impediments in his way and harass him in every conceivable manner in order to stifle and smother his voice.

4409. **Commentary :**

Relying on their power, prestige and great numbers the Meccans rejected the Divine Message. They are warned here that when punishment will come upon them, these things will not in the least avail them. The punishment took the form of the Fall of Mecca.

4410. **Commentary :**

The Holy Prophet is enjoined to say to disbelievers that it is not for him to say when the threatened punishment will be, but come it must.

4411. **Commentary :**

يُظْهِرُ (reveals) is aorist from أَظْهَرَ which means, he made it manifest, evident; he showed,

discovered or revealed it. أَظْهَرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ means, God made him to know it. أَظْهَرَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعَدُوِّ means, God made him to overcome or prevail over or gain mastery over his enemy (Lane). In view of literal meaning of the word إِظْهَارُ the expression إِظْهَارُ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ means, being given very frequently knowledge of the secrets of the unknown that relate to and concern events of the greatest import. See also next verse.

4412. **Commentary :**

The verse embodies an incontestible criterion to distinguish between the nature and scope of the secrets of the unknown that are revealed to a Divine Messenger and those that are disclosed to other righteous believers. The distinction lies in the fact that whereas God's Messengers are granted إِظْهَارُ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ i.e. predominance over the unseen; secrets revealed to other righteous and holy men of God do not enjoy this distinction. Moreover, revelation granted to God's Messengers, being under special Divine protection, is completely secure against

29. That He may know that they (Divine Messengers) have delivered the Messages of their Lord. And He encompasses *all* that is with them and He keeps count of all things.⁴⁴¹³

لَيَعْلَمَنَّ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا رِسَالَتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا
فِي كُتُبِهِمْ وَأَخْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا ۝

being distorted or tampered with by Evil Spirits, while secrets revealed to ordinary righteous men are not so safe.

4413. Commentary :

The revelation of Divine Messengers is granted security against being distorted or

tampered with, because they have a great Divine mission to fulfil and a great Heavenly Message to deliver. It is also intended that people should realize that the Prophets would succeed in their mission and that obstacles and impediments placed in their way by disbelievers could not arrest or retard its progress.

CHAPTER 73

SŪRA AL-MUZZAMMIL

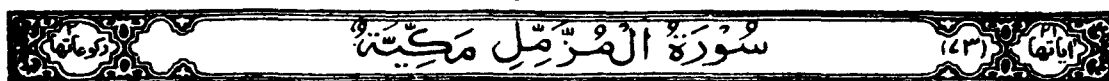
(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

A consensus of scholarly opinion assigns the revelation of this *Sūra* to the earliest period of the Call; some consider it to be the third Chapter to be revealed. It receives its title from the opening verse.

In the preceding *Sūra* (Al-Jinn) it was stated that angels descend upon Divine Messengers to guard the Word of God revealed to them from being distorted or tampered with. In the present *Sūra* the Holy Prophet is enjoined to devote a part of the night to Prayer and remembrance of God so that angels may descend upon him to help him against the evil plots and machinations of his enemies.

Like all Meccan *Sūrās*, this *Sūra* also deals mainly with the Divine mission of the Holy Prophet and with the truth of the Quranic revelation. It foretells, in brief but in very forceful words, the eventual triumph of the Holy Prophet and adduces the fulfilment of the prophecy as an argument in support of Life after death and the Resurrection. Particular emphasis has been laid on Prayer and remembrance of God which is a most effective means to draw Divine help and succour in preparation for the mighty task that lay ahead of the Prophet.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O thou wrapped in *thy* mantle awaiting the grace of God⁴⁴¹⁴

3. ¹Stand up in Prayer at night except a small portion thereof⁴⁴¹⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُرْمَلُ ②

قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b17 : 80 ; 50 : 41 ; 52 : 50 ; 76 : 27.

4414. Important Words :

المرمل (wrapped in mantle) is derived from the root زمل which means, he ran and went along quickly. زمله means, he bore or carried it, namely, a load. زمله على البعير means, he made him to ride behind him on the camel so as to counter-balance him. زمله في ثوبه means, he wrapped him in his garment. تزمّل means, he wrapped himself. زمّل (ordinarily) means, a man wrapped in his garments; one bearing a heavy responsibility (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of different significations of the word زمّل the verse has been variously interpreted. The simple explanation is the one given in Bukhārī. After his first spiritual experience when the angel of God came to the Holy Prophet with Divine revelation he rushed home very much frightened. The fright was quite natural because the experience was quite novel. The Prophet asked to be wrapped in a mantle. As wrapping also implies the sense of joining together and uniting, the meaning of the verse may be something like this, "O thou who art to unite the nations of the world under one banner!" The Holy Prophet has been described in the *Ḥadith* as الحاشر i.e., the Joiner and Uniter of the nations of the world (Bukhārī, *kitāb Manāqib al-Nabī*).

Applying the other root meanings of زمّل given under Important Words, it may be said: (1) That the Holy Prophet is described in the verse as one who has to go a long distance on the road to awaken humanity to the realization of its high destiny, and therefore he has to run fast i.e., work hard, incessantly and fast. (2) That he is one who is to carry a heavy load, a very great responsibility of preaching the Divine Message to the world. (3) That the Holy Prophet may have been reminded of his onerous task of preparing a community of God-fearing followers, who, imbued with the same noble ideals and fired with the same unflagging zeal as himself, should help him to convey to mankind the Message of Islam. زمّل also means to make another person ride behind oneself on the camel so as to maintain balance. It is to the onerous duties and responsibilities of the Holy Prophet and to his high status as a Divine Teacher that in reality reference has been made in the verse under comment, and not to his being wrapped in his mantle. From the time he received this revelation, the Holy Prophet's life was not his own. It was given to God and man.

4415. Commentary :

In this and the next verse the Holy Prophet is told that praying to God in the stillness of the night will prepare him for the heavy task entrusted to him.

4. Half of it, or reduce it a little.

نَصْفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ۝

5. Or add to it *a little*—“and recite the Qur’ān, a good recital.”⁴⁴¹⁶

أَوْزِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ۝

6. Verily, We shall charge thee with a weighty Word.⁴⁴¹⁷

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝

7. Verily, getting up at night for prayer is the most potent means of subduing *the self* and most effective in speech.⁴⁴¹⁸

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ۝

417 : 107 ; 25 : 33.

4416. Important Words :

رتل (recite) is derived from رتل (ratila). They say رتل الشيء *i.e.*, the thing was or became well arranged. رتل الشعر means, the front teeth were or became even in their growth or separated one from another; were well set together and were white and lustrous. رتل الكلام (rattala) means, he put together and arranged well the component parts of the speech and made it distinct. ترتيل in its original sense relates to the teeth, signifying their being separated one from the other, and when used with regard to a speech it signifies, putting together and arranging well its component parts and making it distinct. رتل القرآن means, I recited the Qur’ān in a leisurely manner, deliberately, distinctly and well (Lane & Aqrab).

4417. Commentary :

قولا ثقيلا may have any one of the following meanings : (a) The Qur’ān is pregnant with the highest import. (b) It is too heavy to be displaced or dislocated *i.e.*, the Quranic Teaching will continue to guide mankind and no other Teaching would ever take its place or improve upon it. (c) No word or letter of the

Qur’ān could be changed, altered or amended.

(d) The Qur’ān will break all opposition and (e) no single book or a collection of books could encompass all the knowledge contained in it. Briefly, the collective and concerted effort of all mankind will not be able to produce a Book like the Qur’ān.

According to an oft-quoted *hadith*, the Holy Prophet, whenever a revelation descended upon him, went into a trance and felt a peculiar sensation so that even on an extremely cold day big drops of sweat fell from his forehead and he felt a dead-weight of his body (Bukhārī). The Quranic revelation being “a weighty word,” his paroxysm was due to this sensation.

4418. Important Words :

وطأ (subduing) is derived from. وطئ. They say وطئ الشيء *i.e.*, he trod under foot the thing. وطئ الفرس means, he mounted the horse. وطئ أرض عدوه means, he entered the enemy’s land (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Getting up in the night for Prayer is a potent means of subduing one’s self and

8. Thou hast indeed, during the day a long *chain of engagements*.⁴⁴¹⁹

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ۝

9. So remember the name of thy Lord, and devote *thyself* to Him with full devotion.⁴⁴²⁰

وَادْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ۝

of bringing under effective control one's evil propensities and inclinations. It is a proved experience of all spiritual wayfarers and holy men that nothing conduces to one's spiritual development so much as Prayers at night. In the stillness and solitude of night, a peculiar sort of peace prevails and all nature is quiet, and man, being all alone with his Creator, enjoys special communion with Him, and becomes illumined with a special heavenly light which he imparts to others. The time is eminently suited for man to develop strength of character and to make his speech sane, solid and sound. Effective speech and infinite capacity for hard work are two very necessary qualifications for a Reformer to succeed in his mission, Prayer at night helps in the development of these two qualities. Having acquired control over one's mind and tongue one comes to exercise control over others. This is the significance of the verse under comment. The verse may also mean that Night-Prayer causes the actions of man to correspond to his words, which constitutes another sure sign of the strength of his character and the sincerity of his heart.

4419. Important Words :

سَبْحًا (long chain of engagements) is derived from سَبَحَ. They say سَبَحَ فِي الْمَاءِ i.e., he swam in the water and took pleasure in it. سَبَحَ فِي الْأَرْضِ means, he went far into the land. سَبَحَ فِي حَوَائِجِهِ means, he busied himself in the accomplishment of his needs. سَبَحَ (sabhun) also signifies the running of a horse in which the fore-legs are stretched forth well as are the

arms of a man in swimming; being quick or swift (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the multifarious duties of the Holy Prophet which he performed with alacrity, and took pleasure in doing them. As Head of a newly-established Republic, surrounded on all sides by bitter foes and beset with the plots and machinations of internal enemies, and as a Divine Teacher and Reformer who had to prepare a community, which was unacquainted with even the rudiments of knowledge, to become the leaders of nations in civilization and culture, the Prophet's task was indeed very difficult, which can better be imagined than described, but which he performed with a success which has baffled the world.

4420. Important Words :

تَبَتَّلَ (devote) is derived from بَتَلَ (battala). They say بَتَلَهُ i.e., he severed it or separated it from another thing. بَتَلَ إِلَى اللَّهِ means, he detached himself from worldly things and devoted himself exclusively and sincerely to the service of God. بَتُولَ means, a woman detached from worldly things and entirely devoted to God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In this verse the Holy Prophet is told that he could accomplish his heavy task of reforming a corrupt community and preparing it for the leadership of the world by devoting himself completely to God.

10. ^a*He is the Lord of the East and the West; there is no God but He; so take Him for thy Guardian.*⁴⁴²¹

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ
وَكَيلًا ⑩

11. And bear patiently all that they say; and part with them in a decent manner.

وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ⑪

12. ^bAnd leave Me alone with those who reject *the truth*, possessors of ease and plenty; and give them a little respite.⁴⁴²²

وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِيَ النَّعَةِ وَمَقْلَهُمْ قَلِيلًا ⑫

13. Surely, with Us are *heavy fetters* and a raging fire,⁴⁴²³

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ⑬

14. And food that chokes, and a painful punishment⁴⁴²⁴

وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ⑭

15. On the day when the earth and the mountains shall quake,^c and the mountains will become like crumbling sandhills.⁴⁴²⁵

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ
كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ⑮

^a26 : 29 ; 37 : 6.

^b68 : 45 ; 74 : 12.

^c56 : 5-6 ; 79 : 7.

4421. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is told here again that while preaching his Divine mission he will meet with bitter opposition and persecution. Therefore, he should, on the one hand, put his full trust in God, the Lord of the East and the West, and, on the other, bear with patience and fortitude the jibes, opposition and persecution of his enemies.

4422. Commentary :

Rejectors of Truth are reprimanded that instead of being grateful to God for "ease and plenty" provided to them they reject the Divine Message.

4423. Important Words :

أَنْكَالًا (fetters) is the plural of نَكَل which means, fetter, chain, bracelet, necklace; a kind of bridle. نَكَلَ بَفْلَانٍ means, he inflicted upon him such a punishment as to make him an example for others (Aqrab).

4424. Important Words :

غُصَّة (choking) is derived from غَصَّ . They say غَصَّ بِالْغَيْظِ i.e., he was or became choked with wrath. غُصَّ الْمَجْلِسُ بِأَهْلِهِ means, the sitting place became choked with people. غُصَّ also means, he became grieved or disquieted in mind. غُصَّة means, a thing by which one is choked; choking wrath or rage; grief or disquietude of mind (Land & Aqrab).

4425. Important Words :

كَثِيبًا is derived from كَثَبَ . They say كَثَبَ التُّرَابَ i.e., he scattered dust part over part. كَثِيبٌ means, a sand-hill heaped up by the wind (Lane).

مَّهِيلًا (crumbling) is derived from هَالَ . They say هَالَ عَلَيْهِ التُّرَابُ i.e., he put the earth over it. الْهَيْلُ which is infinitive noun means, sand that does not remain steady in its place. مَّهِيلٌ means, running sand. كَثِيبٌ مَّهِيلٌ means, a crumbling sandhill (Aqrab).

16. Verily, We have sent to you a Messenger, who is a witness over you,^a even as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh.⁴⁴²⁶

17. But Pharaoh disobeyed the Messenger,^b so We seized him with a terrible punishment.

18. How will you then, if you disbelieve, guard yourselves against a day which will turn children grey-headed?⁴⁴²⁷

19. *On that day* the heaven will be rent asunder and His promise is bound to be fulfilled.⁴⁴²⁸

20. This, surely, is a reminder.^d So let him, who will, take a way unto his Lord.⁴⁴²⁹

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا
أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ۖ

فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُ أَخْذًا وَبِيلًا ۖ

فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ
شِيبًا ۖ

إِنَّ السَّمَاءَ مُنْفِطِرَةٌ بِهَا كَان وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ۖ

يَعِ ۖ إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اخْذِنِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ۖ

^a33 : 46 ; 48 : 9. ^b20 : 79 ; 26 : 67 ; 28 : 41. ^c82 : 2. ^d20 : 4 ; 74 : 55 ; 76 : 30 ; 80 12.

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the Day of Resurrection, or to the day of the Fall of Mecca, or to any calamitous day when catastrophic changes take place and deeply-rooted institutions totter and fall and very powerful and big and influential people are blown away like chaff before the wind.

4426. Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the following Biblical prophecy about the appearance among the Ishmaelites of a great Prophet of God like unto Moses :

“I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My word in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him” (Deut. 18 : 18-19).

4427. Commentary :

“Turning children grey-headed” in the present

verse, “grinding asunder of the heaven in the next, “rolling up of heaven” in 21 : 105, and similar expressions used in the Qur’ān (81 : 12; 82 : 2 & 84 : 2) are metaphors for most calamitous happenings which bring about disastrous changes. The reference in this and in the next verse and also in verse 15 above is to the Day of Resurrection or the day of the Fall of Mecca. See also v. 15.

4428. Commentary :

The promise referred to in the verse was the total defeat and destruction of the forces of evil followed by the triumph of Islam which was fully manifested in the Fall of Mecca, when the old corrupt order died and from its ruins emerged a new and better order. This may be the meaning of the words, “the heaven will be rent asunder.”

4429. Commentary :

The verse contains an invincible argument in support of the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation. The *Sūra* was one of the

21. Surely, thy Lord, knows that "thou standest up *praying* for nearly two-thirds of the night, and *sometimes* half or a third thereof,^a and also a party of those who are with thee. And Allah determines the measure of the night and the day. He knows that you cannot keep its *measure*, so He has turned to you in mercy. Recite, then, as much of the Qur'an as is easy *for you*. He knows that there will be some among you who may be sick and others who may travel in the land seeking Allah's bounty, and others who may fight in the cause of Allah. So recite of it that which is easy *for you*, and "observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat,^b and lend to Allah a goodly loan. And whatever good you send on before you for your souls, you will find it with Allah. It *will be* better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful."⁴⁴³⁰

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ
وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ
وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّ لَّنْ تَخْصُوهُ
فَتَأْتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقْرِعُوا مَا تَيْسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ
عَلِمَ أَنَّ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ
يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَأَقْرِعُوا مَا تَيْسَّرَ مِنْهُ
وَآقِيبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا
حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِن خَيْرٍ نَّحْدُوهُ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ وَأَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا
يَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

^a26 : 219.

^b25 : 65 ; 41 : 39.

^c2 : 246 ; 57 : 12, 64 ; 18.

^d2 : 211.

earliest two or three Chapters revealed at Mecca at a time when the Holy Prophet himself perhaps had no very clear idea of the momentous significance of his mission and of the strong opposition and bitter persecution he was to meet with at the hands of those very people who formerly looked upon him as the most trusted and honest man in Mecca. Circumstanced as the Holy Prophet, was, it could hardly be imagined that one day Mecca would lay prostrate at his feet and the Quraish leaders would be begging him for mercy and forgiveness. The wildest stretch of human imagination could hardly conceive of such stupendous happenings as have been foretold in the preceding verses ; much less could a human being

declare in such forceful terms that these prophecies would be fulfilled. The Qur'an is certainly a Reminder from God.

4430. Commentary :

In the opening verse of the Sūra the Holy Prophet was enjoined that he should constantly pray in the night, for this would give him the necessary strength to discharge the grave responsibility of preaching the Divine Message that was shortly going to devolve on him. In the verse under comment he is assured of Divine pleasure, and is told that he has faithfully carried out God's command about night-prayer, not only he, but a party of believers also. The command was not specifically

directed to the followers of the Holy Prophet, but being always desirous of following in his footsteps, they copied his example in this respect also.

The sentence "Allah determines the measure of the night and the day," signifies that sometimes the nights are long and sometimes they are short and sometimes the day and the night are equal.

The words *ان لن تحصوه* may apply to Muslims in general. In this sense they are told that all

of them would not be able to say night-prayer regularly and punctually. Or the words may signify that as Muslims are longing to win God's pleasure and attain nearness to Him, so they should read the Qur'ān thoughtfully. In this way they would acquire knowledge of, and insight into, Divine attributes.

Besides the meaning given in the text, the expression *فاقرؤا ما تيسر منه* may mean: (1) recite of the Qur'ān as much as you possibly can.

CHAPTER 74

SŪRA AL-MUDDATHTHIR

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

By common consent this *Sūra* was one of the first two or three revealed at Mecca. This and the preceding *Sūra* (Al-Muzzammil) seem to be “twins” as they are closely linked as regards time of revelation and their tone and tenor. The present *Sūra*, in fact, complements the subject matter of its predecessor. The *مزمّل* (*Muzzammil*) of the previous *Sūra*, immersed in devotional prayers and contemplation, and passing through a period of intense preparation for the attainment of spiritual perfection, had developed from that into *مدثر* (*Muddaththir*) i.e., the Destroyer of sin and Vanquisher of the forces of evil, the Deliverer of mankind, their Leader, Guide and Warner. From that time onward, the Prophet’s life was no more his own. It was given to God, and to man. He preached the Divine Message with unswerving purpose, in the face of insult, opposition and persecution.

The *Sūra* opens with a firm command to the Holy Prophet to stand upright, proclaim the Truth he has and warn those who would not accept it—those whom wealth, power and position had rendered spiritually blind and deaf that the day of Divine punishment would be a day of extreme distress for them; they would burn in the fire of Hell. They are further told that they would suffer punishment because they did not offer Prayers or fed the poor—duties which they owed to God, and man—and because also they ignored the Divine Message and indulged in vain pursuits, persisting in the denial of the Day of Judgment till death overtook them. The *Sūra* ends on the note that the Qur’ān is but a Reminder and an Exhortation. He who will accept its Message will accept it for the betterment of his own soul and he who will reject it, would do so to his own detriment.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. O thou who hast covered thyself with a cloak,⁴⁴³¹
3. Arise and warn.⁴⁴³²
4. And thy Lord do thou magnify.
5. And thyself do thou purify.⁴⁴³³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ②

قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ③

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ④

وَنِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1.

4431. Important Words :

المدثر (one who has covered himself with a cloak) is derived from دثر which means, it (a trace or mark) became effaced or obliterated. تدثر أو ادثر (*tadaththara* or *iddaththara*) means, he wrapped himself with a garment. دثره (*daththara*) means, he destroyed or obliterated him or it; he covered him with a warm garment. دثر الطائر (*daththara*) means, the bird adjusted, or put in order, its nest. تدثر الفرس means, he leaped upon and rode the horse. تدثر العدو means, he vanquished the enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

According to the different meanings of the root-word, المدثر would mean: the effacer or obliterator; the reformer or the one who adjusts or puts things in order; the vanquisher; the one who is ready to leap upon and ride the horse. The word has also been interpreted as one entrusted with bearing the heavy load of the responsibilities of a Prophet (Qadīr). The word also means, one adorned with the best human natural powers and qualities and prophetic dignity (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī). All these epithets fully apply to the Holy Prophet. Tradi-

tions show that after a few verses of the *Sūra* had been revealed, further revelation ceased for several months (Bukhārī). As revelation was a novel spiritual experience for the Holy Prophet, its cessation was intended to make the fright that had affected his mind wear away, and to attune him with the majesty and dignity of the Divine Word.

4432. Commentary :

Being fully prepared by devotional Prayers, deep contemplation, and long night vigils for the onerous task of reforming the world, the *Muzzammil* becomes the *Muddaththir* i.e., the leader and guide of mankind; and is commanded to rise up and proclaim the Divine Message and warn its rejectors of the evil consequences of rejection.

4433. Important Words :

ثياب (garments) is plural of ثوب which means, a garment. The Arabs say, فلان نقي الثوب i.e., such a one is pure in heart, conduct or reputation. دنس الثوب means, vicious or perfidious; طاهر الثياب means, a righteous man who does good works. ثياب means, clothes; dependants or followers of a person;

6. And uncleanness do thou shun,⁴⁴³⁴

وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ④

7. And bestow not favours seeking to get more *in return*,⁴⁴³⁵

وَلَا تَمُنْ تُسْتَكْثِرُ ⑤

8. And for the sake of thy Lord do thou endure *trials* patiently.⁴⁴³⁶

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ ⑥

9. "And when the trumpet is sounded,"⁴⁴³⁷

فَإِذَا نُفِثَ فِي السَّافُورِ ⑦

^a23 : 102 ; 50 : 21 ; 69 : 14.

weapons. It also means, the wearer's body or self. They say خلى ثيابك عن ثيابي i.e., separate thyself from me. It also signifies, a person's works. ان الميت ليبحث في ثيابه التي يموت فيها means, the dead man will be raised according to the works with which his life ended (Lane, Aqrab & Steingass).

Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is enjoined that before entering upon his great mission he should prepare a body of followers, pure of heart, conduct and reputation. Or the verse may mean that he should himself be a paragon of piety, righteousness and pure conduct.

4434. Commentary :

الرجز meaning idol-worship (Lane) the verse may be taken as enjoining the Holy Prophet to spare no pains to exterminate idolatry. Idol-worship is the basic sin, but it takes different forms with different people, for instance, worship of idols made of wood or stone; worship of human beings; worship of one's desires, of old customs, usages, etc.

4435. Commentary :

God's Prophets serve, and suffer for, their peoples from no motive other than sincere

concern and solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being. "I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only with the Lord of the worlds." (26 : 110), has always been the motto which has prompted and guided their noble efforts to redeem their peoples from the bondage of sin.

4436. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is told in this verse that he will be opposed and persecuted by the forces of evil as the result of his missionary efforts. He should, therefore, be ready to bear all opposition and persecution with patience and fortitude, and with a loving and sympathetic heart.

4437. Commentary :

The words "When the trumpet is sounded" may mean ; "When the hour of punishment of disbelievers arrives." The reference may be to the Fall of Mecca, when the Meccans, as if summoned by a bugle, stood as criminals before the Holy Prophet. Or the verse may mean ; when a Divine Reformer who is a Bugle by which God summons men to Himself makes his appearance and calls men to God. Or the verse may refer to the Holy Prophet's own call to his people.

10. ^aThat day will be a distressful day.⁴⁴³⁸

11. For the disbelievers it will not be easy.

12. ^bLeave Me to deal with him whom I created alone.⁴⁴³⁹

13. ^cAnd *then* I gave him abundant wealth.

14. ^dAnd sons, abiding in *his* presence,⁴⁴⁴⁰

15. And I prepared for him all necessary things.

16. Yet he desires that I should give *him* more.

فَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ مِّنْ يَّوْمٍ عَسِيرٍ ۝١٠

عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ۝١١

ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۝١٢

وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَّمْدُودًا ۝١٣

وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ۝١٤

وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَهْنِئَةً ۝١٥

ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ۝١٦

^a25 : 27.

^b68 : 45 ; 73 : 12.

^c68 : 15.

^d68 : 15.

4438. Commentary :

"A distressful day" signifies the Day of Resurrection or the day of the final defeat of disbelief and the complete triumph of Truth. This and the following several verses (vv. 10-30) give a graphic description of the great material benefits which the enemies of Truth enjoy and as a consequence of which they reject the Divine Message, incurring punishment in this world and in the Hereafter.

4439. Commentary :

The verse, besides the translation given in the text, may mean : "Leave Me alone to deal with him whom I created," or "leave Me to deal with him who, on account of the great wealth, power and position God has bestowed upon him thinks himself to be peerless among his compatriots, وحيد meaning unique, incomparable."

Though the verse applies to every arrogant and conceited disbeliever, it may particularly apply to Walid bin Mughira. He was an outstanding personality among the Quraish, and was known among his fellow citizens by such high sounding titles as وحيد (unique) and ريحان قريش (fragrance of the Quraish). He was extremely handsome and was well known for his elegant poems and other accomplishments. He had 10 to 13 sons and was a very rich man.

4440. Commentary :

The verse means that Mughira's sons also commanded respect like him. They, too, were offered a distinguished place in the assemblies which he attended. Or, Mughira was so rich that his sons always kept company with him; not wanting to go anywhere to earn their living.

17. Certainly not! for he was opposed to Our Signs.⁴⁴⁴¹

18. I shall soon impose on him an overwhelming hardship.

19. Lo! he reflected and calculated!

20. Ruin seize him! how he calculated!⁴⁴⁴²

21. Ruin seize him again! how he calculated!

22. Then he looked,

23. "Then he frowned and scowled,⁴⁴⁴³

24. Then he turned away and was disdainful,

25. And said, ^b"This is nothing but magic handed down:

26. 'This is nothing but the word of man'.

27. Soon shall I cast him into the fire of Hell.^c

28. And what will make thee know what Hell-fire is?

29. *It* spares not and *it* leaves naught.

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِإِيْتِنَا عَنِيدًا ۝١٧

سَأَرْهُقُهُ صِعُودًا ۝١٨

إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ۝١٩

فَقَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝٢٠

ثُمَّ قَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝٢١

ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ۝٢٢

ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ۝٢٣

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۝٢٤

فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ۝٢٥

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ۝٢٦

سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ ۝٢٧

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سَقَرُ ۝٢٨

لَا تُبْقِي وَلَا تَذَرُ ۝٢٩

^a80 : 2. ^b11 : 8 ; 34 : 44 ; 37 : 16. ^c37 : 24.

4441. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that disbelievers entertain very high ambitions but those ambitions shall not materialize. On the contrary, they shall be punished ; the particle *كَلَّا* being used to reject the request of a person and to reprimand him for making it (Lane).

4442. Commentary :

Ruin seized Walid bin Mughira. Three

of his sons, viz., Walid, Khalid and Hisham accepted Islam, others perished before his eyes. He suffered heavy financial losses and ultimately died in poverty and disgrace.

4443. Commentary :

When the Qur'an was read to him, Mughira being himself a poet of distinction, said that it was not poetry, nor was the Prophet a liar, but only a magician. He frowned and scowled in disdain and went away in high huff.

30. ^aIt scorches the face.

لَوَاحَةٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ۝

31. Over it are nineteen angels.⁴⁴⁴⁴

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ ۝

32. And none but angels have We made wardens of the Fire. And We have not fixed their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve, so that those who have been given the Book may attain certainty and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have been given the Book as well as the believers may not doubt, and that those in whose hearts is disease and the disbelievers may say, 'What does Allah mean by such an illustration?'^b Thus does Allah adjudge astray whom He pleases and guide whom He pleases. ^cAnd none knows the hosts of thy Lord but He. And this is nothing but a Reminder for man.⁴⁴⁴⁵

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً ۖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا
عِدَّتَهُمُ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيَقِنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَيَزِدَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِيمَانًا وَلَا يَزِنَ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَلِيَقُولَ الَّذِينَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا
مَثَلًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن
يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا

ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْبَشَرِ ۝

^a70 : 17. ^b13 : 28 ; 14 : 5. ^c33 : 10 ; 48 : 5.

4444. Commentary :

"Nineteen", may refer here to man's natural powers and faculties which, according to some *Sufis* or mystics are nineteen in number. Proper use of these faculties or powers helps a person's spiritual development while their misuse causes his moral death. In consonance with these nineteen faculties, which constitute the real source or instrument of a man's good or bad actions, nineteen angels will be appointed to cleanse the guilty of their sins; each angel being entrusted with the duty of cleansing sins committed through one particular faculty. In fact, Hell as conceived by the Qur'an is a purgatory where

the human soul, after being cured of its spiritual maladies, will resume uniform spiritual development.

4445. Commentary :

The apparently enigmatic "nineteen" may concern some great Divine design or purpose which, when unfolded, will, on the one hand, greatly add to the faith of believers and, on the other, to the embarrassment and mental confusion of disbelievers and of "those in whose heart is disease." Otherwise the number of God's angels is legion, beyond human count or computation, just as the stages of man's spiritual progress in the Hereafter are numberless.

33. Nay, by the moon, كَلَّا وَالْقَمَرِ ۝
34. And by the night when it retreats وَالَّيْلِ إِذَا دُبِرَ ۝
35. ^aAnd by the dawn when it shines forth,⁴⁴⁴⁶ وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ ۝
36. ^bVerily, it is one of the greatest calamities.⁴⁴⁴⁷ إِنَّهَا لِأَحَدَى الْكُبَرِ ۝
37. A warning to man, نَذِيرًا لِلْبَشَرِ ۝
38. To him among you who wishes to advance *in virtue* or hang back.⁴⁴⁴⁸ لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوْ يَتَأَخَّرَ ۝
39. ^cEvery soul is pledged for what it has earned,⁴⁴⁴⁹ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ۝

^a81 : 19.^b79 : 35.^c14 : 52; 40 : 18; 45 : 23.**4446. Commentary :**

This and the preceding two verses name the things mentioned therein as evidence to prove the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation and of the Holy Prophet's claim as God's Messenger—the two principal themes dealt with in this as in all other Meccan *Sūras* revealed in the early years of the Call. These things are the "moon," the "retreating night" and the "bright dawn." The "moon" may signify the Promised Messiah who, after borrowing heavenly light from the Holy Prophet had to spread it in the world; the "retreating night" may mean the night of spiritual darkness that would begin to retreat after the appearance of the Promised Messiah, and the "bright dawn" may signify his advent.

4447. Commentary :

The verse means that the rejection of the Holy Prophet is one of the greatest calamities that can befall man.

4448. Commentary :

The Message of Islam is intended equally for all men—for those who seek to develop their spiritual self and win God's pleasure as well as for those who would wish to cling to the world.

4449. Important Words :

رهينة (is pledged) is derived from رهن . They say رهن الشيئ عند فلان *i.e.*, he deposited the thing with him to be in lieu of that which he had taken or received from him; he deposited the thing with him as a security for a debt (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that every soul shall remain in pledge unless it will have paid for the sins it had committed *i.e.*, unless it will have been cleansed of sins after suffering punishment for them.

40. Except those on the right hand.^a إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ ۝
41. *They will be* in Gardens en- فِي جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۝
quiring. ۝
42. From the guilty ones,⁴⁴⁵⁰ عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝
43. 'What has brought you into the مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ۝
Fire of Hell?' ۝
44. They will say, 'We were not of قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ ۝
those who offered Prayers,^b ۝
45. 'Nor did we feed the poor'.⁴⁴⁵¹ وَلَمْ نَكُ نَطْعِمُ الْيَتَامَى ۝
46. 'And we indulged in idle talk وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ ۝
with those who indulge therein. ۝
47. 'And we used to deny the Day وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝
of Judgment,^d ۝
48. 'Until death overtook us'.⁴⁴⁵² حَتَّىٰ أَتَانَا الْيَقِينُ ۝
49. So the intercession of inter- فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ ۝
cessors will not avail them.^{f4452-A} ۝

^a56: 28 ; 69 : 20 ; 90 : 19. ^b75 : 32. ^c69 : 35; 89 : 19; 107 : 4. ^d75 : 33.
^e15 : 100. ^f20 : 110 ; 34 : 24.

4450. Commentary :

The particle عن also means, 'from' (Lane).

4451. Commentary :

Offering of Prayers and feeding the poor constitute the two pillars on which the whole edifice of Islam stands. They represent man's duties to God and to his fellow beings.

4452. Important Words :

اليقين (death) is derived from يقن . They say يقن الأمر *i.e.*, the matter became clear and established. يقنه or يقن به means, he knew it; he was or became certain or sure or

he made sure of it, intuitively and inferentially. يقن means, certainty; security (Lane & Aqrab). It also means, death, because death is as certain as anything.

4452-A. Commentary :

The verse means that nobody will dare intercede for disbelievers, their sins of omission and commission being many and of a heinous character. Elsewhere the Qur'an says that sinners will not be allowed to approach near the threshold of God *i.e.*, they will be completely denied God's grace.

50. Now what is the matter with them that they are turning away from the Exhortation,

51. As if they were frightened asses

52. Fleeing from a lion?

53. Nay, every man among them desires to have open sheets of revelation given to him.⁴⁴⁵³

54. Never! verily, they fear not the Hereafter.⁴⁴⁵⁴

55. Never! verily this is an exhortation.⁴⁴⁵⁵

56. Let him, then, who will, remember it.

57. And they will not remember unless Allah *so* please^a. He alone is worthy to be feared and He alone is worthy to forgive.⁴⁴⁵⁶

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

كَأَنَّهُمْ خُمُرٌ مُسْتَنْفِرَةٌ ﴿٥١﴾

فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

بَلْ يُرِيدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُؤْتَى صُحُفًا

مُنشَرَّةً ﴿٥٣﴾

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا يَخَافُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٥٤﴾

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذَكُّرٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَّرْهُ ﴿٥٦﴾

وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَى

وَأَهْلُ الْبَغْفِرَةِ ﴿٥٧﴾

^a18: 25; 76 : 31; 81 : 30.

4453. Commentary :

The reference here may be to the impudent demand of disbelievers mentioned elsewhere in the Qur'an, viz., that they would not believe unless God spoke to them direct (2 : 119), or unless the Prophet should bring down a Book for them from Heaven which they could read (17 : 94).

4454. Commentary :

The disbelievers reject the Divine Message because they have no faith in the Hereafter where they shall have to render an account of their actions.

4455. Commentary :

The demand of disbelievers can never be accepted as the Qur'an has fully satisfied all needs and requirements of man. It is a

Reminder and an Exhortation *par excellence*, and through it the nations that will accept its Message and act upon its teaching will rise to great eminence.

4456. Commentary :

The verse may mean, as elsewhere stated, that disbelievers will not benefit by the Qur'an unless they make their will conform to the will of God, i.e., they subordinate all their desires to the Divine will (76 : 31). Or it may signify that it is not possible for man to find the right way unless God sends down His Word for his guidance. The words "He alone is worthy to be feared," mean that we should take God alone as a shield for protection against sins (the root-word وقى meaning, to guard or shield oneself). Or it may mean, that God alone can grant forgiveness when a man falters or falls.

CHAPTER 75

SŪRA AL-QIĀMAT

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This *Sūra* takes its title, القيامة (the Resurrection), from the opening verse. It wholly deals with the Resurrection. The *Sūra* is decidedly one of the earliest Chapters which were revealed at Mecca, because the Meccan *Sūrās* specifically deal with God's Unity, Resurrection and Revelation.

Towards the end of the preceding *Sūra* it was emphatically stated that those people who will accept the Quranic Message will rise to eminence and will find an honoured place among the comity of great and powerful nations. The present *Sūra* opening with a discussion of the subject of Resurrection throws a broad hint that a great moral resurrection is going to be brought about among a morally degraded and degenerate people—the Arabs—through the ennobling teachings of the Qur'ān and the purifying example of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* opens with a solemn affirmation that the Resurrection undoubtedly will take place, and significantly enough adduces man's spiritual resurrection, as evidence in support of this affirmation. As a further proof, it swears by نفس لواءة i.e. the self-accusing spirit, which in action is the first stage of the process of spiritual regeneration. Then an oft-repeated objection of disbelievers is mentioned, viz., when they are dead and reduced to dust, how will they be raised again to life. The *Sūra* effectively rebuts this objection by saying that in their heart of hearts they know that man's sins never go unpunished and, therefore, there must be a day when they will be called to account for what they had done in this life. Then the collection of the Qur'ān and the Divine protection of its text are offered as further arguments in the same connection, since of all revealed Scriptures the Qur'ān has laid the greatest emphasis on the inevitability of the Resurrection. Next, a brief but graphic description is given of the agony of death and man's intense desire to be spared of it. This shows that at the moment of death the fear that one will have to render an account of one's actions gnaws at one's heart. Towards the close of the *Sūra* disbelievers are admonished that man has not been created without a purpose or without responsibility, and that he will have to account for his failure to discharge his duties to God and to his fellow-beings. Disbelievers are further reminded that man's physical development from a sperm-drop into a full-fledged human being, endowed with unique powers and faculties, constitutes an irrebuttable argument that his creation is intended to serve a sublime purpose and that his life will not end with the departure of the soul from its physical tabernacle.

سُورَةُ الْقِيَامَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

2. Nay! I call to witness the Day of Resurrection.⁴⁴⁵⁷

لَا أَقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ﴿٢﴾

3. And I do call to witness the self-accusing soul, *that the Day of Judgment is a certainty*.⁴⁴⁵⁸

وَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ﴿٣﴾

a See 1 : 1.

4457. Commentary :

For the nature, significance and philosophy of the Quranic oaths see detailed notes on 91 : 2 and 37 : 2. One object of oaths, however, is to lay emphasis on the importance of the subject about which an oath is taken.

لَا (nay) is used in different senses. Here it may signify, "it is not like what they think." Sometimes, it is used as an answer to some objection or in repudiation of what is said before. In this and the next verse it is used to refute the disbelievers' assertion made in v. 4, about the impossibility of the Resurrection and also to emphasize the importance of the oath.

القيامة (the Resurrection) signifying a great and calamitous occurrence, may refer to three events: (a) The death of a person is called القيامة الصغرى i.e., the small resurrection. It is to this resurrection that reference is made in the famous *hadith*, viz., من مات فقد قامت قيامته i.e., he who dies, his resurrection has indeed taken place. (b) The moral death of a whole people or nation. This is called القيامة الوسطى i.e., the middle resurrection. (c) The Final Resurrection. The word قيامة (resurrection) has been used in the Qur'ān in all these three senses.

4458. Commentary :

The Qur'ān has mentioned three stages of development of the human soul. The first stage is called النفس الامارة i.e., the uncontrollable spirit or the spirit prone to evil, when the animal in man is predominant.

The second stage is that of النفس اللوامة i.e., the self-accusing spirit, when man begins to be conscious of evil that is, when his awakened conscience upbraids him for doing bad deeds and restrains his passions and appetites. In moments of weakness of the flesh, in this stage, he may falter or fall, but will not perish, every failure bringing with it a fresh reproach and repentance. The human in man gets the upper hand in him. It is the beginning of his spiritual resurrection. The النفس اللوامة has been cited here in evidence of the Final Resurrection. If man has no responsibility, if he has not to account for his deeds in an after-life, why this pricking of conscience at the doing of an evil deed?

The highest stage of development of the human soul, however, is that of النفس المطمئنة i.e., the spirit at rest. At this stage the human soul becomes practically immune to failure or faltering and is at peace with its Creator.

4. Does man think that We shall not assemble his bones^a ?⁴⁴⁵⁹

5. Yea, We have the power to restore his very finger-tips^b.⁴⁴⁶⁰

6. But man desires to continue to send forth evil deeds in front of him.

7. He asks, 'When will be the Day of Resurrection^c?'⁴⁴⁶¹

8. When the eye is dazzled,⁴⁴⁶²

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَلَّنْ نَجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ ۖ

بَلَىٰ قَدِيرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُسْوَىٰ بَنَانُهُ ۖ

بَلْ يُرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ ۖ

يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَمَةِ ۖ

فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ ۖ

^a23 : 83 ; 37 : 54 ; 56 : 48 ; 79 : 12.

^b17 : 100 ; 39 : 80.

^c78 : 2 ; 79 : 43.

4459. Commentary :

The objection of disbelievers *viz.*, when they are dead and reduced to bones and dust how would they be given a new life, is repeatedly mentioned and effectively answered in the Qur'ān. See 17 : 50-52 and 36 : 78-80.

4460. Important Words :

بَنَانٌ (finger-tips) is the plural of بَانَةٌ which is derived from بَنَى which means, he remained or stayed in a place, بَنَانٌ means, fingers; ends or extremities thereof; finger-tips; toes; all the limbs or members of the body; any part or all the limbs; arms or hands or legs or feet (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

At another place in the Qur'ān (36 : 78-80), the objection of disbelievers about life after death has been answered by stating that Almighty Creator Who has created man from a mere sperm drop has the power to restore him to life after he is dead, but in the present verse the restoration of his finger-tips has been adduced as an argument to refute the same objection. In fact, the word بَنَانٌ represents man's power and strength, as by means of his

hand he grasps an object and defends himself. In fact man's hands *i.e.*, his fingers, are the most important members of his body. The word بَنَانٌ as given under Important Words may stand for the whole human body. Thus the verse signifies that God has the power to restore all the powers of man, or even of a whole people when, to all intents and purposes, they are dead and defunct.

4461. Commentary :

The question seems to have been asked in derision or doubt. In fact, doubt about the Hereafter gives rise to a mocking attitude on the disbelievers' part.

4462. Important Words :

بَرِقَ (is dazzled) means, he feared so that he was astonished or amazed or stupefied at seeing the gleam of lightning; he was frightened, or he became perplexed or unable to see his right course. بَرِقَ بَصَرُهُ means, his eye became dazzled or it became weak. بَرَقَتْ قَدَمَاهُ means, his feet became weak (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The metaphor "when the eye is dazzled," signifies, "when the opponents of Truth are completely confused and baffled."

9. And the moon is eclipsed,⁴⁴⁶³

وَحَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ۙ

10. And the sun and the moon are brought together,⁴⁴⁶⁴

وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ۙ

11. On that day man will say, 'Whither to flee'?

يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْزُ ۙ

12. Nay! There is no refuge!⁴⁴⁶⁵

كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ ۙ

13. With thy Lord *alone* will be the place of rest that day.

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ ۙ

^{a80} : 35.

4463. Commentary :

“Moon” being a symbol of the political power of the Arabs, the verse may mean: When the power of the Arabs will break and their glory depart. Or the darkening of the moon may mean the darkening of both the sun and the moon, as the moon borrows its light from the sun, so that when the moon is darkened it means that the sun also has become dark.

4464. Commentary :

The expression, “the sun and the moon are brought together” may signify that the whole solar system will be completely disrupted. Or the words may signify the destruction of the political power of the Arabs and of the Iranian dynasty, the moon being the symbol of the political power of the former and the sun that of the latter. Or the reference may be to the lunar and solar eclipses—a highly unusual phenomenon, which, according to a *ḥaḍīth* was to occur in the time of the Promised Mahdī. The *ḥaḍīth* is to the following

effect: ان لمهدينا آيتان لم تكونا منذ خلق السموات الخ *i.e.* For our Mahdī there are two signs which have never been witnessed since the time when the heavens and the earth were created, *viz.*, that the moon will be eclipsed on the first night and the sun on the second day in the month of Ramaḍān (Baihaqī). This meant that the day of the final triumph of Islam and that of the defeat and destruction of the forces of evil will dawn with the Mahdī's appearance in the world. Strangely enough, both the sun and the moon were eclipsed in the month of Ramaḍān in 1894 after Aḥmad, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement had made the claim that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdī.

4465. Important Words :

أوزر (refuge) is derived from أوزر . They say أوزر الشيئ *i.e.*, he protected, guarded the thing; concealed it or took it away. أوزر الرجل means, he gave asylum to the man. وزر (*wazarun*) means, place of refuge; a high mountain; a mountain where one takes refuge (Lane & Aqrab).

14. That day will man be informed of that which he has sent forward and has left behind.⁴⁴⁶⁶

15. Nay, man is a witness against himself;

16. Even though he puts forward his excuses.

17. Move not thy tongue with this *revelation* that thou mayest hasten to *preserve* it.⁴⁴⁶⁷

18. "Surely, upon Us *rests* its collection and its recital."⁴⁴⁶⁸

يُنَبِّئُ الْإِنْسَانَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ ط

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بِصِيرَةٍ ي

وَلَوْ أَلْفَى مَعَاذِيرَهُ ط

لَا تُخْرِكُ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ط

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ط

15 : 10.

4466. Commentary :

The words "that which he has sent forward and has left behind," may mean, the evil deeds which man did but which he should not have done and the good deeds which he should have done but he failed to do, *i.e.*, his sins of omission and commission.

4467—4468. Commentary :

Bukhārī reports that in the beginning when a certain portion of the Qur'ān was revealed to the Holy Prophet, in his anxiety lest he should forget it, he would start hurriedly repeating it. It is this practice that the Prophet was enjoined in this verse to give up, because, as stated in the following three verses, God had taken upon Himself not only to safeguard the text of the Qur'ān from being tampered with but also to see that it was collected in the form of an immaculately arranged Book (see General Introduction) and that its Message was conveyed and explained to the whole world (15 : 10). Or the meaning may be that, because the preceding verses referred to a day of reckoning for disbelievers, the Holy Prophet was naturally anxious that the revelation bearing upon the promised punishment should

come soon. He is here told that he need have no anxiety on that score, as it was God's own responsibility, when a revelation should descend and what form the punishment should take, and that the Qur'ān should be collected, read and explained to the world. It may be convenient to set out here three quotations: "There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text (of the Qur'ān) which Muḥammad himself gave forth and used" (Muir). "Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Qur'ān have failed (Enc. Brit.). "The Qur'ān is perhaps the most-read book in the world. Certainly it is the most often memorized, and possibly it exerts the greatest influence on those who read it" (The Religions of Man).

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse has also been interpreted as follows: "It is Our responsibility that We should explain the Quranic revelation through your tongue" (Ruh al-Ma'ānī). This speaks volumes for the inviolability of the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah* and its indispensability as a safe and sure guide, next only to the Qur'ān itself. For a detailed exposition, however, of this and the preceding verse see General Introduction and 15 : 10.

19. So when We recite it, then follow thou its recital.

20. Then upon Us rests the expounding thereof.

21. Nay, but you love the present life^a; 4469

22. And you neglect the Hereafter.

23. Some faces on that day will be bright,^b

24. Looking *eagerly* towards their Lord;⁴⁴⁷⁰

25. °And some faces on that day will be dismal,^{4470-A}

26. Thinking that a back-breaking calamity is *about* to befall them.⁴⁴⁷¹

فَإِذَا قُرَأْنَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ۝١٩

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ۝٢٠

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ۝٢١

وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ۝٢٢

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ۝٢٣

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ۝٢٤

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِآسِرَةٍ ۝٢٥

تَتَنَبَّأْنَ أَنَّ يُفْعَلَ بِهِنَّ فَاقِرَةٌ ۝٢٦

^a87 : 17.

^b88 : 9.

^c68 : 44 ; 80 : 41 ; 88 : 3-4.

4469. Commentary :

The particle *كَلَّا* besides meaning, "your assertion that Resurrection will not take place is false," has been taken to mean, "it is as certain as anything that the Resurrection shall take place (Kabīr).

4470. Commentary :

The verse means that the righteous believers will look to their Lord, expecting to be rewarded for the good deeds they had done in this world. Or the meaning may be that they will be endowed with special spiritual eyes to see God; but it does not mean that God has a body and that He can be seen with our physical eyes. "Eyes cannot reach Him and He reaches the eyes and He is Incomprehensible" (6 : 104). The sight of God will be a special Divine manifestation, which will be unfolded to the human soul untrammelled by its earthly raiment.

4470-A. Important Words :

باسرة (dismal) is derived from *بسر* which

means, he frowned; contracted his face; he grinned; he was gloomy or dismal. *بسر وجهه* means, he frowned or he contracted his face excessively or he looked with intense dislike or hatred (Lane & Aqrab).

4471. Important Words :

فاقرة (back-breaking) is derived from *فقر* which means, he stigmatized a man. *فقر البعير* means, he made an incision in the nose of the camel. *فقرته الداهية* means, the calamity broke the vertebrae of his back. *فاقرة* means, an act that breaks the vertebrae of the back; a back-breaking calamity. They say *عمل به الفاقة* i.e., he did to him that which broke his back (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The Fall of Mecca broke the back of the Quraishite power.

27. Hearken! when *the soul of the dying man* comes up to the throat^{a, 4472}

28. And it is said, 'Who is the wizard to save him?'⁴⁴⁷³

29. And he is sure that it is the hour of parting;

30. And one shank rubs against another shank in death agony;⁴⁴⁷⁴

31. Unto thy Lord that day will be the driving.

R. 2 32. For he neither accepted the truth, nor offered Prayers^{b; 4475}

33. 'But he rejected the truth and turned his back;

كَلَّا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الشَّرَاقِي ۚ

وَقِيلَ مَنْ يَنْصُرُاقِي ۚ

وَكَلَّنَ أَتَاهُ الْفِرَاقِي ۚ

وَالْتَفَتِ السَّاقِي بِالسَّاقِ ۚ

يَا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ السَّاقِي ۚ

فَلَا صَدَّقَ وَلَا صَلَّىٰ ۚ

وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۚ

^a56 : 84.

^b74 : 44.

^c74 : 47.

4472. Important Words :

الترَاقِي (throat) is the plural of تَرَاقِي meaning, the collar-bone. They say بَلَغَتْ رُوحَهُ التَّرَاقِي i.e., he was about to die. تَرَاقِي means, the uppermost parts of the chest or parts of the throat next to the chest (Lane & Aqrab).

4473. Important Words :

راق (wizard) is derived from. رَقِيَ They say رَقِيَ الْجَبَلُ i.e., he ascended the mountain. رَقَاه (raqqa) means, he charmed him or fascinated him by uttering spell. رَاق means, one who charms; a charmer; one who ascends (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse may mean: (a) Who will ascend with the soul of the dying man, the angel of mercy who will take him to Paradise or the angel of punishment who will drag him to Hell? (b) Where is the wizard or charmer who will avert

the approaching death or relieve the dying man of his agony?

4474. Commentary :

The word السَّاقِ literally meaning shank, metaphorically signifies a calamity or affliction (27 : 45 & 68 : 43). The verse signifies that one affliction will be joined to another for the departed soul ; the agony of leaving his near and dear ones behind will be joined to the agony of death and the punishment awaiting the disbeliever in the next world.

4475. Commentary :

صدق (accepted the truth) stands for right belief and صَلَّى (offered Prayers) for good conduct, the two basic principles of the Islamic teaching. Prayer is the essence of عِبَادَةِ which is total submission and conforming one's conduct to Divine laws. Thus the verse purports to say that both the mind and body of disbelievers rebelled against God.

34. Then he went to his kinsfolk, strutting along *in pride*.⁴⁴⁷⁶

35. 'Woe unto thee! and woe again!

36. 'Then woe unto thee! and woe again!⁴⁴⁷⁷

37. Does man think that he is to be left *to himself* uncontrolled?⁴⁴⁷⁸

38. 'Was he not a drop of fluid, emitted forth?

39. ^bThen he became a clot, then He shaped and perfected *him*.

ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَتَمَطَّى ۚ

أَوَّلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوَّلَىٰ ۚ

ثُمَّ أَوَّلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوَّلَىٰ ۚ

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ۚ

أَلَمْ يَكُنْ نُطْفَةً مِّنْ مَّنِيٍّ يُبْنَىٰ ۙ

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ۙ

^a18 : 38 ; 36 : 78 ; 80 : 20.

^b23 : 15 ; 40 : 68 ; 96 : 3.

4476. Important Words:

يَتَمَطَّى (strutting) is from مَطَّ . They say مَطَّ الشَّيْءُ i.e., he stretched or lengthened the thing. مَطَّ خَدَهُ means, he behaved proudly. يَتَمَطَّى means, he strutted along (Aqrab).

Commentary :

False pride, arrogance and conceit are, as repeatedly stated in the Qur'ān, at the root of all disbelief and rejection of the Divine Message and of opposition to God's Prophets and Messengers.

4477. Commentary :

These two verses speak of a double punishment—mental agony and physical punishment, or punishment in this world and in the next.

4478. Important Words :

سُدًى (uncontrolled) is derived from

سَدَا (sawwun) which is inf. noun signifies going at random, heedlessly or in a headlong manner, without aim or object, not following a guide to the right course. ذَهَبَ كَلَامُهُ سُدًى means, his discourse proved useless (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse reproachfully reminds the conceited and disdainful disbeliever of the grand object of his life and of his accountability before his Lord and Master in the Hereafter. Does man think that he has been created without an aim or object and that death is the end of all things, and that he will not be called upon to explain his conduct before his Lord in the next life? The whole idea is inconsistent with God's Wisdom. It is inconceivable that God should have created man from an insignificant thing—from a sperm drop—and should have

40. "Then He made of him a pair,
the male and female.

41. Has not such a One the power
to raise the dead to life?^b

فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ۖ

يَعْلَمُ الْيُسُ دَلِكَ بِقَدْرِ عَلَى أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى ۚ

^a92 : 4. ^b17 : 51-52 ; 36 : 80 ; 46 : 34.

endowed him with such great natural powers and faculties as to make him the centre and pivot of all creation and then should have left him without control, to eat, drink and be merry. It is further clear from this verse that the

Lord Who created him from such an insignificant beginning will give him a new life when he is dead and is reduced to crumbled bones and dust, to make spiritual progress which knows no end. This is the substance of the next four verses.

CHAPTER 76

SŪRA AL-DAHR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūra* like its predecessor belongs to the early Meccan period and takes its title from the word Al-Dahr, occurring in its opening verse. It has also appropriately been called Al-Insān.

Towards the end of the previous *Sūra* it was stated that man's creation from an insignificant fluid and his development into a full-fledged human being, endowed with great natural powers, leads to the inescapable inference that his life has a Divine purpose to serve and that the Great God Who created him from a sperm-drop possesses the power to give him a new life after he is dead. The present *Sūra* is an extension of the same theme, viz., that man has been gifted with wonderful natural capabilities to rise to great spiritual heights.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* in its opening verses reminds man of his insignificant beginning by the words, "Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of?," and proceeds to say that he has been endowed with reason and understanding, in order that, following the path shown to him by God's Prophets, he may make interminable spiritual progress and thus achieve the object for which he has been created. But when Divine Teachers appear to guide men to God, some of them reject God's Message and incur His displeasure, while others, more fortunate, respond to the Divine Call, follow the Teacher of the Age and earn great heavenly blessings. Then, the *Sūra* gives a beautiful description of the Divine favours which are bestowed upon the righteous believers, in this world and in the Hereafter, referring briefly also to the kind of punishment which the disbelievers receive for their wilful rejection of God's Message. The *Sūra* fittingly closes with the observation that God has revealed the Qur'ān, the most perfect Teaching to guide man to the path which leads to the Lord and Creator of all creation, but he can derive no benefit from the Divine Teaching unless he conforms his will to the will of God.

سُورَةُ الدَّهْرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٤٦)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of ^{b. 4479}

3. "We have created man from a mingled sperm-drop that We might try him; so We made him hearing, seeing. ⁴⁴⁸⁰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ

شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا ②

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ ۖ نَّبْتَلِيهِ

فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَبِيحًا بَصِيرًا ③

^aSee I : 1.

^b19 : 68.

^c18 : 38; 35 : 12; 36 : 78; 40 : 68; 80 : 20.

4479. Important Words :

حين (period) is derived from حان . They say حان الشيء i.e., the time of the thing came near, it happened. حين means, time or a space or period of time, any time; a continuous time; an appointed time; time absolutely; the time when an event takes place; time without end (Lane & Aqrab).

دهر (time) is infinitive noun from دهر . They say دهر القوم أمر مكره i.e., an evil event befell the people. دهر means, time from the beginning of the world to the end; any long or unlimited period of time; a period of time whether long or short; time without end, differing from زمان which means, time having end. دهر also means, an age; fate or fortune; an evil event or accident; a misfortune; a calamity; a purpose; a desire; the end that one has in view; a custom or habit (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

الانسان (man) in this and the next verse does

not mean human species as such, but every man. The verse means that before man is born, he is not mentioned, spoken of, or referred to; the reference being to his insignificant and unmentionable beginning.

4480. Commentary :

أشاج is the plural of مشيج which means, a mixture. Man is created from a sperm-drop which itself is a mixture of several things, the implication being that he has been endowed with various natural powers, faculties and attributes meant for his moral and spiritual advance. This process of the creation of man points only to a general rule of creation; not that in no case could it be otherwise. That man is gifted with insight and understanding signifies that he is a free agent, enjoying discretion and volition; therefore he is responsible for his actions. The belief in man's freedom of action and responsibility leads inevitably to the belief in the Hereafter.

4. We have shown him the Way,^a whether he be grateful or ungrateful.⁴⁴⁸¹

5. ^bVerily, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and iron-collars and a blazing Fire.⁴⁴⁸²

6. But the virtuous drink of a cup, tempered with camphor—⁴⁴⁸³

7. A spring wherefrom the servants of Allah drink, making it gush forth abundantly.⁴⁴⁸⁴

8. They fulfil *their* vow, and fear a day the evil of which is widespread.^{4484-A}

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا

كَافُورًا ﴿٤٢﴾

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٤٣﴾

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ

مُسْتَظِيرًا ﴿٤٤﴾

^a90 : 11. ^b18 : 103; 29 : 69; 33 : 9; 48 : 14.

4481. Commentary

God has given man reason and understanding. He has made him responsible for his actions, and through His Messengers and Prophets has shown him the way that leads to God-realization. But it is for man to make right use of God-given faculties and opportunities (this being the meaning of شكر), and by submitting to Divine laws to achieve the object of his creation or by flouting them to bring about his spiritual death.

4482. Commentary :

For a detailed explanation of the nature and significance of the punishments of Hell, see 69 : 30-33. Briefly, the verse alludes to the fact that every deed which a man does is followed by a corresponding act of God. The entanglements of disbelievers in worldly affairs will take the form of chains in the next world, cares of the world will take the form of iron-collars, and greed and carnal desires that of Hell-fire.

4483. Important Words :

كافورا (camphor) is derived from كفر i.e., to cover or to suppress. The meaning is that

the quaffing of camphor-drink will have the effect of cooling down animal passions. The heart of righteous believers will be cleansed of every impure thought and they will be refrigerated with the coolness of deep Divine knowledge.

4484. Commentary :

Righteous believers will drink of cups which will be filled from springs which they have dug with great labour i.e., the deeds which they had done in the earthly life would appear in the next world in the form of springs. This is the first stage of spiritual evolution which requires hard and continuous striving on the part of believers, because unless man brings under control, and suppresses, his evil propensities, he cannot make any spiritual progress. The "spring" mentioned in the verse is the spring of God's love and Divine realization.

4484-A. Commentary :

Fulfilling "the vow" signifies discharging of man's duties to God. Man's obligations to his fellow-beings are mentioned in the next verse.

9. "And they feed, for love of Him, the poor, the orphan, and the prisoner,"⁴⁴⁸⁵

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا
وَأَسِيرًا ⑨

10. *Saying*, 'We feed you for Allah's pleasure *only*. We desire no reward nor thanks from you.'^{4485-A}

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِرِجَاءِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً
وَلَا شُكْرًا ⑩

11. 'Verily, we fear from our Lord a frowning, distressful day.'⁴⁴⁸⁶

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا ⑪

12. So Allah will save them from the evil of that day, and will grant them cheerfulness and happiness.

فَوْقَهُمْ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً
وَسُرُورًا ⑫

13. ^bAnd He will reward them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden and a raiment of silk,

وَجَزَاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ⑬

^a2 : 178; 90 : 15-17. ^b22 : 24.

4485. Important Words :

طعام (food) is inf. noun from طعم *i.e.*, he tasted or ate. طعام means, food; wholesome and agreeable food which satisfies the eater. They say ما يطعم آكل هذا الطعام *i.e.*, the eater of this food does not become satisfied (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse may mean : (1) Because they love God, so, in order to win His pleasure, they feed the poor and the captives. (2) They feed the poor for the sake of feeding them, *i.e.*, they do the good act of feeding for the sake of doing good, seeking no reward, appreciation or approbation for what they do. (3) They feed the poor while they themselves need the money which they spend on others. The verse also signifies that the righteous believers give the poor wholesome and agreeable food, طعام meaning agreeable and wholesome food (Lane). This implies that the believers are expected to give in charity the things they love most. Elsewhere the

Qur'an says : "You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend in the way of Allah out of that which you love best (3 : 93).

4485-A. Commentary :

In everything that a believer does his whole attention is directed towards winning the pleasure of God—his highest ambition. He wants no return, reward or appreciation. His reward is with his Lord and Master.

4486. Important Words :

عبس (frowning) is derived from عبس. They say عبس وجهه *i.e.*, he frowned; he grinned, frowning or looking sternly or austere. يوم عبوس means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one distressful (Lane).

قمطرير (calamitous) is derived from قمطر which means, it was or became distressful or calamitous. يوم قمطرير means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one knit the brow or contract the skin between the eyes. شر قمطرير means, an intense evil (Lane).

14. Reclining therein upon couches,^a they will experience there neither excessive heat nor excessive cold^b.⁴⁴⁸⁷

مُتَكِلِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا
وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا^{١٣}

15. And its shades will be close over them, and its clustered fruits will be brought within easy reach.

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلُّهَا وَذُلَّتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَدْلِيًا^{١٤}

16. ^cAnd vessels of silver will be passed round among them, and *also* goblets of glass,

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِآنِيَةٍ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ
قَوَارِيرًا^{١٥}

17. *Bright as glass but made of silver*, which they will measure according to *their own* measure.⁴⁴⁸⁸

قَوَارِيرًا مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ قَدَرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا^{١٦}

18. And therein will they be given to drink a cup tempered with ginger,⁴⁴⁸⁹

وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا^{١٧}

^a18 : 32; 36 : 57; 83 : 24..

^b20 : 120.

^c43 : 72.

4487. Important Words :

زمهريرا (excessive cold) is derived from زمهر. They say زمهرت العين او ازمهرت i.e., the eye became red on account of anger. ازمهراليوم means, the day became intensely cold. ازمهر وجهه means, his face became contracted with a stern or morose look. زمهرير means, cold or intense cold (Lane & Aqrab).

4488. Commentary :

The vessel from which the righteous will drink will be as white as silver and as bright and crystal-clear as glass, and they will receive the paradisaical drink in quantity according to the measure of the good deeds they had done in this life.

4489. Commentary :

زنجبيل (ginger) is a compound of زنى (meaning to ascend) and جبل (meaning mountain). The compound word زنجبيل therefore means, "he ascended the mountain." زنجبيل or ginger is the root of a plant, very useful in promoting the natural heat of the body. The name given to it points to this property, for it gives strength to and generates heat in the weak

body so as to enable a person to ascend precipitous heights. These two verses in which كافور (camphor) and زنجبيل (ginger) are respectively spoken of call attention to the two stages through which a believer has to pass in order to make advance, from the low position of slavery to passion, to the heights of virtue and righteousness. The first stage is that in which poisonous materials are suppressed and the flood of passions begins to subside. This we term the كافور (camphor) stage ; for in this stage what is effected is only the suppression of poisonous matter, just as كافور has the property of nullifying the strong effect of passion. But the spiritual power which is required to overcome all difficulties is acquired in the second stage which is called the زنجبيل stage. The spiritual ginger (زنجبيل) which has the effect of a tonic on the spiritual system is the manifestation of Divine Beauty and Glory which affords nourishment to the soul. Braced with this manifestation, the spiritual wayfarer is able to traverse the dreary deserts and to climb the

19. There will be a spring herein named Salsabil.⁴⁴⁹⁰

20. "And there will wait upon them youths who will not age. When thou seest them thou thinkest them to be pearls scattered about.

21. And when thou seest thou wilt see there a bliss and a great kingdom.⁴⁴⁹¹

22. On them will be garments of fine green silk and thick brocade.^b And they will be made to wear bracelets of silver.^c And their Lord will give them to drink a pure beverage.⁴⁴⁹²

عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا ①٩

وَيُطَوَّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَدَانُ مَخْلُودُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ

حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَنثُورًا ③٠

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا ③١

عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٌ خُضْرٌ وَاسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُوفٌ

أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ③٢

a52 : 25; 56 : 18.

b18 : 32; 44 : 54.

c18 : 32; 22 : 24; 35 : 34.

steep heights to be met with on his spiritual journey. To make men understand these two spiritual stages two words have been employed by the Qur'an, viz., كافور or that which suppresses poisonous matters and زنجبيل or that which gives strength to ascend spiritual heights and overcome all difficulties in the spiritual journey. Whereas at the كافور (camphor) stage the righteous will themselves drink the wine of God's love, at the much higher زنجبيل (ginger) stage they will be served with this elixir.

4490. Commentary :

The word سلسبيل literally meaning "enquire about the way," the verse purports to say that at the زنجبيل (ginger) stage the spiritual wayfarer becomes so much intoxicated with Divine love that, in his overbearing anxiety

to meet God, he enquires everywhere and of everyone about the nearest and speediest approach to the Divine threshold.

4491. Commentary :

In addition to the spiritual kingdom that the righteous believers have been promised for the Hereafter, they were given mastery of the great empires of the time in this very life.

4492. Commentary :

At the كافور stage of spiritual journey the God-intoxicated wayfarer is described as himself seeking to drink the wine of God's love (v. 6) and at the زنجبيل stage, he is served by others with the lifegiving beverage (v. 18), but at the last or سلسبيل stage God Himself gives him to drink the elixir of everlasting life.

23. "This is your reward, and your labour is appreciated."⁴⁴⁹³

24. Surely, We have revealed unto thee the Qur'an piecemeal.⁴⁴⁹⁴

25. So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord, and yield not to any sinful or ungrateful one among them.

26. ^bAnd remember the name of thy Lord morning and evening.

27. ^cAnd during the night prostrate thyself before Him, and extol His glory for a long part of the night.

28. ^dVerily, these people love the present life, and they neglect a heavy day before them.⁴⁴⁹⁵

إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا ۝

إِنَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ تَنْزِيلًا ۝

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا ۝

وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ۝

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا ۝

إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذَرُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ۝

^a32 : 18; 43 : 73.

^b3 : 42; 33 48 : 10.

^c17 : 80; 50 : 41; 52 : 50 : 50; 73 : 3—5.

^d17 : 19.

4493. Commentary :

For a full discussion of the nature, form and scope of the paradisiacal blessings, see Chapters 52, 55 & 56. This verse and those preceding it may also apply to the great Divine favours that were bestowed upon the followers of the Holy Prophet in this very life.

4494. Commentary :

The Qur'an was revealed gradually and piecemeal. Its revelation spread over a period of 23 years. This gradual process served two great purposes. It helped believers to learn, remember and assimilate it and to mould their lives in accordance with its teaching. The gradual process was also intended to meet the increasing needs of changing circumstances and to strengthen the belief and conviction of Muslims, since, during the interval, they had opportunities to witness fulfilment of prophecies made earlier in the Qur'an. The

piecemeal revelation of the Qur'an also fulfilled the following Biblical prophecy viz., "For it is precept upon precept; line upon line, here a little and there a little: for with strange lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (Isaiah 28 : 11). The construction of the verse and the words used in the Biblical prophecy are expressive of Divine purpose in the gradual revelation of the Qur'an.

4495. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the hopes and fears of disbelievers are confined to this world. They have no thought for the Hereafter. They want to see promises of prosperity and progress made to Muslims and of those of punishment to themselves fulfilled here and now. But God is not in a hurry to punish. The Holy Prophet is enjoined to pay no heed to their demand for punishment but to prepare himself and his followers morally and spiritually by

29. We have created them and strengthened their make; and when We will, We can replace them by others like them^a.⁴⁴⁹⁶

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا أَسْرَهُمْ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَا
أَمثَالَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30. ^bVerily, this is a Reminder. So whoever wishes, may take a way unto his Lord.

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٠﴾

31. ^cBut you will not unless Allah so wills. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.⁴⁴⁹⁷

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

32. He causes whom He pleases to enter His mercy^d, and for the wrongdoers He has prepared a painful punishment.⁴⁴⁹⁸

يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ وَالظَّالِمِينَ أَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

^a56 : 62. ^b0 : 4; 73 : 20; 74 : 55; 80 : 12. ^c18 : 25; 74 : 57; 81 : 30. ^d48 : 26.

night-Prayer and glorification of God.

4497. Commentary :

“Heavy day” may mean the Resurrection Day or the Day when disbelievers are punished in this life.

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse may also mean : (1) It is God’s will that you should exercise your will “to take a way unto your Lord,” and so be admitted into His mercy. (2) You cannot “take the way unto your Lord” unless you subordinate and conform your will to the will of God. (3) You should have subordinated your will to the will of God, but you seem not to have done so.

4496. Commentary :

4498. Commentary :

This verse, in conjunction with the verses preceding it, means that Truth will spread gradually, either that there will come about a great moral revolution in the lives of the people or if they refused to benefit by the Quranic teaching they will be replaced by another people who will carry out Divine will and plan. God is not in a hurry to punish them because He “has created man in the best make” (95 : 5) that he may develop and manifest in himself Divine attributes and not that he may incur His displeasure and be punished.

The verse may also mean that God admits into His mercy him who himself wishes to be admitted into God’s mercy by obeying Divine commandments; مَنْ being the subject of the verb يَشَاءُ .

CHAPTER 77

AL - MURSALĀT

(Revealed befor Hijra)

Noldeke and Muir assign the revelation of this *Sūra*, probably correctly, to the 4th year of the Call. Ibn Mas'ūd, one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet, however, is reported to have said that one day when they were sitting with the Holy Prophet in a cave near Minā, this *Sūra* was revealed. At that time a snake appeared but before they could kill it, the reptile disappeared. Upon this the Holy Prophet said that they had remained safe from the snake as the snake had been safe from them (Qadīr). The *Sūra* receives its title from the first word of the opening verse.

Subject-Matter

Like other early Meccan Chapters, this *Sūra* also deals with the subject of the Resurrection, and as an argument in support of it, adduces the great spiritual revolution that is brought about by Divine Messengers among their peoples, especially the marvellous moral change that the Holy Prophet wrought in the lives of the degenerate and decadent Arabs. The advent of Divine Prophets has been compared in the *Sūra* to the day of decision when bad men are separated from good men or, to use a beautiful metaphor, when grain becomes sifted from chaff. On that Day of Judgment the guilty are punished and the righteous receive the rewards of their good deeds. The *Sūra* gives very apt and adequate description of the punishment—fittingly corresponding to their evil deeds—that will be meted out in the Hereafter, to the defiers and violators of Divine laws and goes on to describe the blessings and boons of Paradise which will be bestowed upon those who regulate their lives and conduct in accordance with them. In support of the doctrine of the Resurrection, the *Sūra* also alludes, quite convincingly, to the development of the sperm-drop into a properly shaped human being, equipped with great natural powers—in itself a wonder of creation. Towards the end, the *Sūra* brings home to disbelievers the untenability of their rejection of the Quranic revelation which has so effectively proved, by drawing attention to man's own creation and to the forces that work in the physical and spiritual worlds, that there is and there must be a life after death in which man shall have to explain his conduct.

سُورَةُ الْمُرْسَلَاتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٢٤)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By those who are sent forth with goodness,⁴⁴⁹⁹

3. Then they push on with a forceful pushing,⁴⁵⁰⁰

4. And by those who spread the truth, a good spreading,⁴⁵⁰¹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا ②

فَالْعَصْفَتِ عَصْفًا ③

وَالنَّشْرِتِ نَشْرًا ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

4499. Important Words :

واو (by). For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths see 37 : 2 & 91 : 2.

عرفا (goodness) is derived from عرف ('arafa) which means, he knew it or he knew it by means of any of the five senses, also by mental perception. عرف ('urfum) means, acknowledgment or confession; goodness or a good action or quality; gentleness; beneficence, a benefit or bounty; common parlance or usage. They say جاء القوم عرفا عرفا i.e., the people came one after another (Lane).

Commentary :

The things, agencies or beings mentioned in this and the following four verses have been taken by various authorities to refer to winds; angels; God's Messengers and their followers; and particularly and very appropriately, to the Companions of the Holy Prophet. As referring to the Companions of the Holy Prophet the verse would mean that in the beginning of Islam the Companions of the Prophet spread the Message of Truth slowly and gently; as referring to Divine Messengers it means that they

appear one after the other with the Message of Truth which they spread with love.

4500. Important Words :

عصفاً (forceful pushing) عصف means, he was quick or swift. عصففت الريح means, the wind blew violently or vehemently. عصف الزرع means, he cut the corn from its stalks or before its maturity. عصف means, straw or broken straw (Lane).

Commentary :

In view of the different meanings of عصف the verse may be taken to mean that after the initial difficulties in the preaching had been overcome, the Companions of the Holy Prophet were able to proceed much faster and carry on the Quranic Message with great vigour; or that, with the help of the Quranic teaching, they scattered before them falsehood and the forces of evil as broken straw is carried before the wind.

4501. Commentary :

The verse means that they proclaimed and spread the Message of Truth far and wide, or scattered the seeds of goodness everywhere.

5. And then they distinguish *fully* between good and evil.⁴⁵⁰²

6. Then they carry the exhortation far and wide.⁴⁵⁰³

7. To excuse *some* and warn *others*.

8. "Verily, that which you are promised must come to pass."⁴⁵⁰⁴

9. So when the stars are made to lose *their* light^b,⁴⁵⁰⁵

10. And when the heaven is rent asunder,⁴⁵⁰⁶

11. And when the mountains are blown away^c,⁴⁵⁰⁷

12. And when the Messengers are made to appear at the appointed time—⁴⁵⁰⁸

فَالْفُرْقَاتِ فَرَقًا ۝

فَاللُّقِيَّتِ ذِكْرًا ۝

عَذْرًا أَوْ تَذَرًا ۝

إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۝

فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ ۝

وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ فُرِجَتْ ۝

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُفِفَتْ ۝

وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أُقِيتَتْ ۝

a51 : 6 ; 52 : 8. b82 : 3. c78 : 21 ; 81 : 4.

4502. Commentary :

With the dissemination of the Quranic Message, Truth became distinct from falsehood and good men from bad men.

4503. Commentary :

Divine Messengers, or the Companions of the Holy Prophet, spread the Divine Message in order to warn people and also to establish the fact that they had conveyed the Message and thus had discharged the duty entrusted to them.

4504. Commentary :

The promised event is either the final triumph of Truth over falsehood, or the Resurrection.

4505. Important Words :

طُمِسَتْ (are made to lose their light). طُمِسْ means, it became effaced or obliterated. طُمِسَ النُّجُومُ means, the star lost or became deprived of its light. طُمِسَ الغيمُ النُّجُومُ means, the clouds concealed or covered the stars. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 10 : 89

Commentary :

The verse means: When the religious divines become corrupt and cease to provide guidance to the masses, or when diverse calamities are about to befall people. The Arabs regarded the disappearance of stars as a sign of impending calamities.

4506. Commentary :

The verse means, when a new revelation begins to be sent down, or when great calamities and miseries befall the world.

4507. Commentary :

The purport of the verse is: When great changes take place, or when powerful and influential men are brought low; or when old and time-honoured institutions are destroyed, root and branch. In short, when the whole corrupt order changes. For جبال see 14:47.

4508. Commentary :

The meaning is: When prophecies concerning the second advent of various Messengers will be

13. To what day have *these portents* been deferred?⁴⁵⁰⁹

14. To the Day of Decision.

15. And what should make thee know what the Day of Decision is!—⁴⁵¹⁰

16. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!⁴⁵¹¹

17. "Did We not destroy the earlier peoples?"

18. We will now cause the later ones to follow them.

19. Thus do We deal with the guilty.⁴⁵¹²

20. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

21. Did We not create you from an insignificant fluid,^b

22. And We placed it in a safe resting place,

23. For a known measure of time?

لَا يَوْمَ يُجَلَّتْ ۝

لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ ۝

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ۝

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَتَوَّلَيْنَ ۝

ثُمَّ نَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْآخِرِينَ ۝

كَذَلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْجَارِمِينَ ۝

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

الَّذِينَ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَهِينٍ ۝

فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ۝

إِلَى قَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ ۝

a6 : 134. b23 : 14 ; 32 : 9 ; 36 : 78.

fulfilled with the appearance in the world of a great Heavenly Reformer who will come in the power and spirit of such Messengers, clad, as it were, in the mantles of all of them.

4509. Important Words :

أجلت (deferred) is derived from أجل (ajila) which means, it was or became delayed, postponed, kept back or it had a term or period appointed for it at which it should fall due or come to pass. أجل الشيء (ajjala) means, he delayed or postponed or deferred the thing or he appointed a period or term for it. (Lane & Aqrab).

4510. Commentary :

The day of decision may mean the day of the triumph of Islam over all other Faiths in the time of the Promised Messiah. Or it may mean the Resurrection Day.

4511. Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to the disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time or in that of the Promised Messiah.

4512. Commentary :

The guilty never go unpunished, and the punishment, in the time of a Divine Messenger, takes place on a larger scale, involving whole communities and nations.

24. "Thus did We determine and what excellent Determiner We are!"⁴⁵¹³

25. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

26. ^bHave We not made the earth so as to hold⁴⁵¹⁴

27. The living and the dead?

28. ^cAnd We placed therein high mountains, and gave you sweet water to drink.⁴⁵¹⁵

فَقَدَرْنَا ۖ فَنِعْمَ الْقَدِيرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ۚ ﴿٢٦﴾

أَحْيَاءَ وَأَمْوَاتًا ۚ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ شَجَاجٍ وَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمْ مَاءً

فَرَاتًا ۚ ﴿٢٨﴾

^a23 : 15.

^b7 : 26

^c13 : 4 ; 15 : 20 ; 21 : 32, 31 : 11.

4513. Commentary :

This and the preceding three verses refer to the extremely subtle process of development of the sperm-drop in the womb into a full-fledged human being, which indeed is a great wonder of creation. This process of creation is advanced as an argument in support of the Resurrection. The Qur'ān has repeatedly used this argument, for there exists a beautiful parallelism between the two, the mother's womb being likened in the Qur'ān to man's life on earth and his birth to the Resurrection.

4514. Important Words :

كَفَاتًا (so as to hold) is derived from كَفَتَ which means, he or it hastened or was quick or swift. They say كَفَتَ الشَّيْءُ إِلَيْهِ i.e., he drew the thing together to himself and contracted, grasped or took it. كَفَات is a place in which a thing is drawn together or comprehended and collected or congregated. The words أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا أَحْيَاءَ وَأَمْوَاتًا mean: "Have We not made the earth a place which comprehends the living and the dead, or which draws to itself the living and the dead, or which is quick in its motion" (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

All mortals live on earth, and when they are dead their remains in one form or other abide in the earth. The verse may also refer to the law of gravitation or to earth's motion on its axis or round the sun. The word كَفَات may also signify that all the physical needs of man have been met in the earth.

4515. Important Words :

شَامَخَات (high) is derived from شَمَخَ which means, it was high or lofty. أُنْفَهُ شَمَخَ means, he raised his nose from pride, i.e., he exalted himself, he was proud or behaved proudly. جَبَل شَامَخ means, a high or lofty mountain. نَسَب شَامَخ means, a proud or high lineage. (Lane & Aqrab).

رَوَاسِيَ (mountains) is the plural of رَاسِيَة and جِبَال رَاسِيَة means, firm mountains (Lane).

Commentary :

The firm and high mountains not only serve as a safeguard against earthquakes but also as natural reservoirs of water on which all life depends for its sustenance.

29. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

30. 'Now move on towards that which you treated as a lie,

31. 'Aye, move on towards a three-pronged shadow,⁴⁵¹⁶

32. 'Neither affording shade, nor protecting from the flame?⁴⁵¹⁷

33. It throws up sparks like *huge* castles,⁴⁵¹⁸

34. As if they were yellow camels.⁴⁵¹⁹

35. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

36. This is a day when they shall not *be able to speak*."⁴⁵²⁰

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنْطَلِقُوا إِلَى مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

إِنْطَلِقُوا إِلَى ظِلٍّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ ﴿٣١﴾

لَا ظِلِيلٌ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْهَبِ ﴿٣٢﴾

إِنَّمَا تَرَفُّي بَشَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ ﴿٣٣﴾

كَأَنَّهُ جِبَلٌ صُفْرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

هَذَا يَوْمٌ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

^a36 : 66 ; 78 : 39.

4516. Commentary :

ظل (shadow), as given under Important Words, serves three main purposes: it is cool; gives protection and is a means of comfort. As is mentioned in the following two verses disbelievers will be denied all these three things. The verse may also have reference to the wrong beliefs; evil deeds; usages, and practices of disbelievers which would take the form of three-pronged shadow in the next world. Or, according to some authorities, Ibn 'Abbas being prominent among them, the reference in the verse may be to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers will be punished from the right, the left and from above.

4517. Commentary :

See 56 : 43-44.

4518. Commentary :

As disbelievers sought ease and comfort and took pride in castles and stately buildings, their sins and transgressions will take the form of flames of fire rising high like huge castles.

4519. Commentary :

The Arabs took pride in their camels of yellow colour which formed the greatest source of their wealth.

4520. Commentary :

See 36 : 66.

37. "Nor shall be permitted to offer excuses.⁴⁵²¹

38. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

39. ^b"This is the Day of Decision; We have gathered you and all the earlier peoples together.

40. 'If now you have any stratagem, use it against me.'⁴⁵²²

41. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

2 42. "The righteous will be in *the midst of shades and springs*,

43. ^aAnd fruits, such as they will desire.

44. 'Eat and drink pleasantly as a reward for what you did.'

45. Thus surely do We reward those who do good.

46. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

47. "Eat and enjoy yourselves a little while *in this world*, *O rejectors of truth*; surely you are the guilty ones.'

48. Woe on that day unto those who reject *the truth*!

49. And when it is said unto them, 'Bow down,' they do not bow down.⁴⁵²³

وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

هَذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُوا ﴿٤٠﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَفَوَاحِشَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكَ نَجْرَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

كُلُوا وَتَسَعُّوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّا كُنَّا مُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

^a9 : 66; 66 : 8. ^b37 : 22. ^c56 : 31. ^d52 : 23 ; 55 : 53 ; 56 : 33. ^e14 : 31 ; 47 : 13.

4521. **Commentary :**

The guilt of disbelievers having been fully established, they will not be allowed to offer any excuse or explanation.

4522. **Commentary :**

The Holy Prophet's enemies have been challenged to do their worst against him.

4523. **Important Words :**

رَكَع (do not bow down). لَا يَرْكَعُونَ

means, he bowed down. The word is sometimes used to denote humility and self-abasement. رَكَعَ إِلَى اللَّهِ means, he humbled himself to God; he completely turned towards God and worshipped Him alone. The famous pre-Islamic poet Nābighah says:

سَبَّلَغَ عَذْرًا أَوْ نَجَا مِنْ أَسْرَعِ
رَأَى رِبِّهِ رَبَّ الْبَرِيَّةِ رَاكِعِ

50. Woe on that day unto those
who reject *the truth*!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. In what discourse then, after
this, will they believe?⁴⁵²⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

i.e., he who worships God alone, the Creator
of the world, will have a good plea and will get
salvation.

ill-fated people have refused to accept such an
infallible Book as the Qur'ān, they will never
listen to truth or find the right path.

4524. **Commentary :**

The verse purports to say that as these

CHAPTER 78

SŪRA AL-NABA'

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This *Sūra* is entitled Al-Naba' (news of tremendous import or great Event), because it deals with a subject of exceptional importance *i.e.*, certainty of the Resurrection, predominance of the Qur'ān over all other revealed Scriptures, and of Islam over other Faiths. The Day of Decision *i.e.*, the day when this Quranic claim will become an established fact, is mentioned twice in the preceding *Sūra* and is repeated in the present *Sūra*. The *Sūra*, according to Muslim scholarly opinion, was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry at Mecca. Noldeke agrees with this opinion.

The *Sūra* opens with an enumeration of great Divine gifts upon man, and directs his attention to the implied suggestion that man has been placed upon this earth to serve a certain object and that his life here is the seed-bed of an eternal future and will be followed by a Day of Reckoning. The *Sūra* then gives a brief but awe-inspiring picture of that Day, and a graphic description of the heavenly blessings that await the righteous and of the punishment which will be meted out to the rejectors of Truth, in this and in the next life.

سُورَةُ النَّبَاِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. About what do they question one another?

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ②

3. ^bIt is about the great Event,⁴⁵²⁵

عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيمِ ③

4. ^cConcerning which they differ.⁴⁵²⁶

الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ④

5. Nay, soon they will come to know.^d

كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ⑤

6. Nay, *We say it* again, they will soon come to know.⁴⁵²⁷

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ⑥

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b38 : 68. ^c38 : 69. ^d102 : 4-5.

4525. Important Words :

النَّبَا (the great Event) among other things means, an announcement of great utility which results either in great knowledge or predominance of opinion and which inspires awe and makes the heart tremble with fear (Lane, Kulliyāt & Rāghib).

Commentary :

The addition of the qualifying word العظيم (great) to النَّبَا which itself means, a great news or event, bespeaks of the tremendous import of the event referred to here. The words النَّبَا العظيم are taken to signify either the Day of Reckoning or the predominance of the Qur'ān over all revealed Scriptures and that of Islam over other Faiths and religious systems. The disbelievers (the verse purports to say) persuade themselves to believe that the predicted event will never take place. So they ask half-mockingly and half in doubt, when that event, so loudly proclaimed, will happen.

4526. Commentary :

The disbelievers do not believe that there will ever be a Day of Reckoning, or that Islam will ever predominate over other religions. Or the verse may mean that they hold divergent views about these things. Some of them call the Qur'ān a jumble of ancient stories, others dub it as magic, yet others say that it is a forgery or at best the creation of the Holy Prophet's own heated imagination. About the Holy Prophet also their views differ. Some call him a mad-man, others a magician, and yet others a poet.

4527. Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers are indulging in wild conjectures about the Resurrection, the Qur'ān, and about the Holy Prophet's future. But time will show that they suffered from illusions, and that the Holy Prophet was bound to succeed in his mission and, as a corollary, that what the Qur'ān has said about the Day of Reckoning is also sure to happen.

7. "Have We not made the earth as a bed,

8. And the mountains as pegs?

9. ^bAnd We have created you in pairs,⁴⁵²⁸

10. And We have made your sleep for rest,⁴⁵²⁹

11. ^cAnd We have made the night as a covering,^{4529-A}

12. ^dAnd We have made the day for the pursuits of life.⁴⁵³⁰

الْمَنَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهْدًا ۝

وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ۝

وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ۝

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ۝

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ۝

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ۝

^a2 : 23 ; 20 : 54 ; 27 : 62 ; 51 : 49.
^c6 : 97 ; 25 : 48 ; 28 : 74.

^b36 : 37 ; 51 : 50 ; 75 : 40 ; 92 : 4.
^d17 : 13 ; 28 : 74.

4528. Commentary :

In these verses (vv. 7—9) we are told that God has created the earth and in it all physical needs of man have been provided, and that He has created the mountains which constitute a storehouse of mineral wealth and serve as great reservoirs of water, and that God has created for man his mate in order that his progeny may continue. This shows that man's life for whose sake all this machinery has been made is not without a definite purpose and that death is not the end of man ; it is followed by a better and fuller life where human soul will make everlasting progress.

4529. Important Words :

سبات (rest) is derived from سبت which means, he rested; he abstained from work. سبات signifies rest and hence sleep, or light or heavy sleep. It also means, a period; a long period, being syn. with دهر (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Nations and communities, after undergoing heavy sacrifices are disposed to take rest. Con-

sequently, there comes upon them a period of forgetfulness. This period is sometimes very long. Then a Divine Reformer appears and they are required again to make sacrifices for the cause of Truth. Thus the circle continues. In fact, سبات (rest) is a great Divine gift. After a day's hard work, sleep gives rest to man's jaded nerves and tired limbs, and thus he is refreshed and replenished for the next day's work.

4529-A. Commentary :

As it is difficult to distinguish between different things in the darkness of night, similarly, in the period of spiritual darkness, before the advent of a Divine Reformer, good and bad people remain mixed up, and it is after a Reformer's appearance that the good people are separated from the bad people.

4530. Commentary :

Just as man's body regains new vigour and strength after restful sleep at night, similarly, after a long period of sloth and inertia in relation to spiritual matters a people become invigorated

13. ¹And We have built above you seven strong *heavens*;⁴⁵³¹

14. And We have made *the sun* a bright lamp.⁴⁵³²

15. ¹And We send down from the dripping clouds water pouring forth abundantly,⁴⁵³³

16. ⁶That We may bring forth thereby grain and vegetation,

17. ^dAnd gardens of luxuriant growth.⁴⁵³⁴

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ۝

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا ۝

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا ۝

لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا ۝

وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا ۝

^a23 : 18. ^b6 : 7 ; 71 : 12 ; 80 : 26. ^c80 : 28-29. ^d80 : 30-31.

to make new sacrifices when a Divine Reformer appears among them.

4531. Commentary :

The reference in the verse seemingly being to the seven major planets of the solar system, of which the sun is the centre, the verse means that the fact that God has created such a vast, complex and flawless system for the service of man inevitably leads to the conclusion that man has been placed on the earth to serve a specific, albeit a very noble and sublime purpose. Seven heavens may also refer to seven stages of spiritual development of man mentioned in *Sūra Al-Mu'minūn*.

4532. Important Words :

وهَّاج (bright) is derived from وهَج . They say وَهَجَتِ النَّارُ *i.e.*, the fire burned or blazened. وَهَجَ يَوْمٌ means, a hot day. وَهَّاجٌ means, burning very brightly; very hot; very shining (Lane & Aqrab).

4533. Important Words :

المعصرات (the dripping clouds) is derived from عَصَرَ which means, he pressed or squeezed the

thing so as to force out its juice, etc., he aided or succoured or saved or preserved someone; he did some benefit to someone. They say أَعَصَرَ السَّحَابَ *i.e.*, the clouds were at the point of having rain pressed forth from them by the winds (Lane & Aqrab).

ثَجَّاجٌ (pouring forth abundantly) is derived from. ثَجَّجَ . They say ثَجَّجَ الْمَاءُ *i.e.*, the water flowed or poured forth vehemently or much. مَطَرٌ ثَجَّاجٌ means, rain pouring forth vehemently or much (Lane).

4534. Commentary :

In these verses (7—17) some of the basic Divine bounties on which man's physical sustenance mainly depends have been mentioned, the implication being that God Who **has** made such adequate arrangement for the physical sustenance of man could not have omitted to make a similar provision for his spiritual sustenance. The verses also point to a striking parallelism between the physical and the spiritual universes. Just as the sun is the centre of the whole solar system, similarly the Holy Prophet is the pivotal point of the spiritual universe. Like the physical universe the spiritual universe has its "earth," "mountains," "rivers," etc.

18. Surely, the Day of Decision has an appointed time:⁴⁵³⁵

19. "The day when the trumpet will be blown; and you will come in large groups;⁴⁵³⁶

20. And the heaven shall be opened and shall become *all* doors;⁴⁵³⁷

21. ^bAnd the mountains shall be made to move and shall become *as if they were* a mirage.⁴⁵³⁸

22. Surely, Hell lies in ambush,

23. A home for the rebellious,

24. "Who will tarry therein for Ages.⁴⁵³⁹

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا^{١٨}

يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا^{١٩}

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا^{٢٠}

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا^{٢١}

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا^{٢٢}

لِلظَّالِمِينَ مَا بَأْسًا^{٢٣}

لَبِثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا^{٢٤}

^a18 : 100 ; 20 : 103 ; 27 : 88 ; 36 : 52.

^b18 : 48 ; 52 : 11 ; 81 : 4.

^c11 : 108.

4535. Commentary :

"The Day of Decision" may signify the Day of Resurrection or the day of the final and complete triumph of Truth and the utter defeat, discomfiture and destruction of the forces of darkness—the day of the Fall of Mecca which was the centre and citadel of idolatry in Arabia.

4536. Commentary :

On the day of the Fall of Mecca the Quraish, as if by the blowing of the trumpet, were gathered before the Holy Prophet, before whom they placed their request that their tyrannies and transgressions might be forgiven and they might be accepted into the fold of Islam.

4537. Commentary :

The verse means that at that time heavenly Signs will be shown in large numbers in support of the righteous, and to the confusion of the wrongdoers.

4538. Commentary :

The verse signifies that men of power and position will lose their authority or influence; or that before the onrush of the conquests of Islam, great and firmly-founded empires will crumble like mounds of loose sand and will disappear so completely that it would seem that their erstwhile existence was only an optical illusion.

4539. Important Words :

أَحْقَاب (Ages) is the plural of حَقَب which means, time; long time; a year or years; seventy years; eighty years or more (Lane & Muf-radāt).

Commentary :

To continue the metaphor, the verse may refer to the long centuries when Islam was in ascendance and its enemies continued to burn in the fire of malice and envy at the uninterrupted progress and prosperity of Muslims.

25. They will taste therein neither sleep nor drink,⁴⁵⁴⁰

26. "Save boiling water and a stinking fluid, intensely cold—⁴⁵⁴¹

27. A meet requital.

28. Verily, they feared not the reckoning,⁴⁵⁴²

29. ^bAnd rejected Our Signs totally.

30. ^aAnd everything have We recorded in a Book.⁴⁵⁴³

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ۝

إِلَّا حَيْثُئَا وَغَسَّاقًا ۝

جَزَاءً وَفَاتًا ۝

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ۝

وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كَذًّا ۝

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا ۝

^a6 : 71; 69 : 37. ^b2 : 40; 7 : 36-37; 22 : 58; 30 : 17; 64 : 11. ^c36 : 13.

As referring to the punishment of Hell, the verse signifies that though its duration will be very very long yet it will not be eternal, the word أَحْقَابًا as shown under Important Words signifying a limited period of time, however, long.

4540. Important Words :

برد (sleep) is inf. noun from برد which means, he slept; he died; it became cool, etc. برد (bardun) means, coolness; pleasantness; enjoyment; comfort; ease; sleep (Lane & Aqrab).

4541. Important Words :

غساق (stinking fluid intensely cold) means, ichor; the washings of wounds; intense cold that burns by reason of its coolness; cold and stinking. حميم وغساق means, boiling fluid and intensely cold and stinking drink (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The turbulent pursuit of evil, and cold

indifference towards virtue, of wrongdoers will take the form of boiling water and intensely cold and stinking drink.

4542. Important Words :

يرجون (feared) is formed from رجا. They say رجا الشيئى i.e., he hoped to get the thing; he feared the thing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The disbelievers did not believe in the Hereafter where they would be rewarded for their good deeds and had no apprehensions that they would be punished for their evil actions. Thus they lacked both the motives—hope and fear—which prompt a man to do good, and refrain from bad, deeds.

4543. Commentary :

Invention of television, wireless and other kindred instruments has established the fact that not only man's actions but even his spoken words can be preserved and reproduced.

See also 24 : 25 & 36 : 66.

31. 'Taste ye therefore *the punishment*; We will give you no increase except in torment.'⁴⁵⁴⁴

2 32. 'Verily, for the righteous is a triumph.'⁴⁵⁴⁵

33. Walled gardens and grapevines,⁴⁵⁴⁶

34. ^bAnd young maidens of equal age,⁴⁵⁴⁷

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا

وَكَوَاعِبَ أَثْرَابًا

^a4 : 176; 13 : 30; 14 : 24; 30 : 16; 68 : 35. ^b56 : 38.

4544. Commentary :

Divine punishment will continue to dog the footsteps of disbelievers. Punishments in various forms will be inflicted upon them one after the other. This is the meaning of the words: "We will give you no increase except in torment."

4545. Important Words :

مَفَاز (triumph) is derived from فَاز which means, he gained what he wished or desired; he was successful; he gained the victory. فَازَ بِهِ means, he attained, acquired or won it. فَازَ مِنْ مَكْرِهِ means, he became safe and secure from what he disliked. مَفَاز means, victory; triumph, a place of safety or security; a cause or means of prosperity or success or of the attainment of that which he deserves; the state of safety. Contrarily it also means, a place of perdition (Lane).

4546. Commentary :

حَدَائِقُ being the plural of حَدِيقَةٌ which means, a garden surrounded by a wall or fence, the verse purports to say that as the righteous believers guarded themselves against sin and vice, their virtuous deeds will take the form of gardens protected by walls in the next life.

Among the paradisiacal blessings أَعْنَابُ

(grape-vines) finds very frequent mention in the Qur'ān. This is because grape is a delicious and substantial food, can be preserved for a long time, and causes intoxication. تَقْوَى (righteousness) also possesses all these three characteristics. So grape-vine is a fit reward for مُتَّقِينَ (the righteous).

4547. Important Words :

For أَثْرَابُ see 56 : 38.

كَوَاعِبُ (young maidens) is the plural of كَاعِبٌ or كَاعِبَةٌ which is derived from كَعَبَ . They say كَعَبَتِ الْجَارِيَةُ i.e., the breasts of the girl began to swell or became prominent. كَعَبٌ (ka'bun) means, any joint; nobility; glory; eminence. أَعْلَى اللَّهُ كَعْبَهُمْ means, may God exalt their glory. ذَهَبَ كَعْبُهُمْ means, their glory departed. جَارِيَةٌ كَاعِبٌ means, a girl whose breasts are beginning to swell (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary :

The righteous will have companions or wives possessing freshness and vigour of youth and enjoying eminent positions, being of noble descent, and fired with high and noble ambitions. Elsewhere (56 : 35) in the Qur'ān the companions of the righteous have been described as فَرَشَ مَرْفُوعَةٍ i.e., noble spouses. For a full discussion of the nature and significance of heavenly blessings, see *Sūras Tūr, Raḥmān and Wāqiah*.

35. And overflowing cups.⁴⁵⁴⁸

وَكَاَسًا دِهَاقًا ۝

36. "Therein they will hear no idle talk nor lying:

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِدًّا ۝

37. A recompense from thy Lord—a gift amply sufficient.

جَزَاءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءٌ حِسَابًا ۝

38. ^bLord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, the Gracious God. They shall not have the power to address Him.

رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ

لَا يُمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ۝

39. On the day when the Spirit and the angels will stand in rows, they shall not speak, except he whom the Gracious God will permit and who will speak only what is right.⁴⁵⁴⁹

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ

إِلَّا مَن أِذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ۝

40. That day is sure to come. So let him, who will, seek recourse unto his Lord.

ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَن شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ

مَأْتَابًا ۝

^a19 : 63; 52 : 24; 56 : 26.

^b19 : 66; 37 : 6; 38 : 67; 44 : 8.

^c11 : 106; 20 : 110.

4548. Important Words :

دهاق (overflowing) is derived from دهق They say دهق الكأس i.e., he filled the cup. دهق الماء means, he vehemently poured the water. كأس دهاق means, a cup so full as to overflow (Lane & Aqrab).

described in words which we can understand. Otherwise the Qur'an says: "No soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them" (32 : 18). And the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "No eye has seen them, nor has any ear heard of them, nor can any mind conceive them" (Bukhārī, *kitāb bad' al-khalq*).

Commentary :

The God-intoxicated pilgrim whose heart is so full of love of God as to overflow with it, will deservedly be given to drink cups, full of beverage that will add to spiritual intoxication which will not abate.

As life in the Hereafter will be a highly developed spiritual copy of the life of this world, therefore, the pleasures of that life have been

4549. Commentary :

"The Spirit" here may signify the perfect Spirit—the Holy Prophet; and "the day" may mean the Day of Resurrection. As applied to the present world, "the day" may signify the day of the Fall of Mecca and "the angels" may stand for the angelic Companions of the Holy Prophet who were with him on that day. For الروح see 16 : 3; 19 : 18; 32 : 10; 42 : 53.

41. Verily, We have warned you of a punishment which is near at hand; "a day when man will see what his hands have sent on before, and the disbeliever will say, 'Would that I were mere dust!'"⁴⁵⁵⁰

إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدُهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا ۝

44 : 43.

4550. Commentary :

"The punishment which is near at hand," seems to refer to the punishment which is meted out to the sinful disbelievers in this world. Elsewhere in the Qur'ān (32 : 22) this punishment has been described as العذاب الأدنى (nearer punishment) as against العذاب الأكبر (the greater punishment) which is

punishment in the Hereafter. This nearer punishment took the form of the defeats which the disbelievers suffered at the hands of Muslims, and finally that of the Fall of Mecca when the cup of their utter mortification and humiliation became full to the brim. The verse gives a befitting picture of the state of mind of the Quraish leaders on that day.

CHAPTER 79

SŪRA AL-NĀZI'ĀT

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

The *Sūra* takes its title from the first word of its opening verse. All competent authorities, including 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and Ibn Zubair, agree that, like its predecessor, this is a very early Meccan *Sūra*. In the preceding *Sūra*, the Muslims were promised power, prosperity and predominance in the world at a time when in the whole of Mecca hardly forty persons had accepted Islam. In the present *Sūra*, however, light is shed on the ways and means by which the Muslims were to achieve greatness and glory, as well as on the signs and marks that point towards the imminent fulfilment of that promise.

The *Sūra* opens with a description of some of the special traits of character of the Holy Prophet's Companions and of other groups of righteous men who, by bringing into play these characteristics, achieve glory, power, victory and prominence. The *Sūra* then points out that power will come to Muslims as a result of wars that will break the strength of the enemies of Islam. Pharaoh's case is then cited to show that opposition to Truth never goes unpunished. Next, we are told that in the extremely weak condition of early Muslims, prophecies about a glorious future of Islam seemed impossible of fulfilment, but the Great God Who created the vast heavens and earth, and Who placed on it rivers and mountains and highways had the power to make the impossible possible, as He can give a new life to the dead in the next world. Towards the close of the *Sūra* it is stated that when the great Event—the complete triumph of Truth or the Final Resurrection—takes place, the guilty will burn in the fire of Hell, but those who had lived a life of righteousness will enjoy the blessings of Paradise.

سُورَةُ النَّازِعَاتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By those who draw *people to true faith* vigorously,⁴⁵⁵¹

وَالَّذِينَ غَرَقُوا ②

3. And *by* those who tie *their* knots firmly,⁴⁵⁵²

وَالَّذِينَ نَشَطُوا ③

4. And *by* those who glide along swiftly,⁴⁵⁵³

وَالسَّابِحِينَ ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

4551. Important Words :

النَّازِعَاتِ (who draw vigorously) is the plural of نازعة which is act. part. fem. gender from نزع . They say نزع الشيئ عن مكانه i.e., he plucked, picked out, the thing from its place, or displaced it. نزع الأمير العامل means, the chief deposed the governor. نزع بالسهم means, he threw the arrow. نزع أباه means, he resembled his father. نزع في القوس means, he drew the bow with great vigour. نزع means, he abstained from such a thing. نزع الى الشيئ means, he desired the thing. نزع بفلان كذا means, he invited such a one to do it (Lane & Aqrab).

غرقا (vigorously) is used here in the sense of إغراقا which is inf. noun from أغرق . They say أغرقه i.e., he drowned him. أغرق الكأس means, he filled the wine cup. أغرق في القوس means, he drew the bow to the full. الإغراق signifies, the sending of the arrows to the utmost extent. أغرق في الشيئ means, he exerted himself much or to the utmost in the thing. أغرق الناس فلانا means, the people fell upon him and overcame him (Lane & Aqrab).

In view of the different meanings of the words نزع and أغرق the expression النازعات غرقا means: those beings or groups of men who root out evil from its roots; who do their duties to the

best of their capacity; who carry out their plans effectively when deposing incompetent rulers; who fight their enemies with the utmost vigour; who abstain from evil things; who fully resemble their spiritual fathers; who are fired with intense zeal for the success of their mission and invite other people to it with fervour and enthusiasm.

4552. Important Words :

الناشطات (who tie the knots firmly) is the plural of ناشطة which is act. part. from نشط (nashata). They say نشط العجل i.e., he tied the cord or rope firmly so as to form a knot. نشط الدلو means, he pulled out the bucket from the well without a pulley i.e., he had to exert himself much to pull out the bucket. نشط من بلد الى بلد means, he travelled from one town to another. نشط زيدا means, he pierced Zaid with an arrow. الناشطات means, those beings or groups of people who exert themselves vigorously in the discharge of their duties (Lane & Aqrab).

4553. Important Words :

السابحات (who glide along swiftly) is the plural of سابحة which is act. part. fem. gender from سبح . They say سبح الرجل i.e., the

5. Then they *advance* and greatly excel *others*,

فَالشَّيْقَتِ سَبْقًا ۝

6. Then they administer the affairs entrusted to them in an excellent manner.⁴⁵⁵⁴

فَالْمَدِيرَاتِ أَمْرًا ۝

7. This will happen on the day when the quaking earth shall quake^{a, 4555}

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ۝

^a56 : 5-6; 73 : 15.

man occupied himself in the management of his affairs and in earning his subsistence. سيج means, he travelled far into the land. سيج في الكلام means, he was profuse or eloquent in his speech. سيج في النهر means, he swam in the canal and went far in swimming (Lane & Aqrab). السابحات means : (1) Those beings or groups of people who go far into the country in the pursuit of their quest. (2) Who are eloquent and powerful speakers. (3) Who swim fast, and go far in swimming i.e. who try to excel one another in carrying out their mission. (4) Who earn their own subsistence and are not a burden upon others.

4554. Important Words :

المديرات (manage their affairs in an excellent manner) is the plural of مديرة which is act. part. fem. gender from دبر (dabbara). They say دبر الامر i.e., he performed or executed the affair with thoughtfulness or consideration; he devised or planned the affair; he governed, managed, conducted or regulated the affair (Lane & Aqrab). المديرات means, those beings or groups of people who plan, manage and conduct the affairs entrusted to them in an excellent manner.

Commentary :

The five verses (2—6) are taken to apply to angels by some scholars and Commentators of the Qur'ān, and واو being a particle of

swearing and meaning "I call to witness," they have been understood as signifying that angels bear witness to the occurrence of the great event mentioned in vv. 7-8. But the evidence of angels is beyond human knowledge or comprehension. The verses, therefore, as the context shows, seem to refer to the Companions of the Holy Prophet and may be taken as embodying a prophecy about the spread of Islam far and wide through their selfless and vigorous efforts and a further prophecy about their being entrusted with the responsibility of conducting and administering public affairs of great importance with ability and justice. Briefly, the verses mention some of the prominent qualities of the Holy Prophet's Companions, viz., that they will diligently acquire spiritual knowledge, and will establish firm relationship with God, and then will carry the Message of Islam to the farthest ends of the earth, will try to excel one another in carrying out their mission and will attain high standards of righteousness in administering public affairs. See also 77 : 2-6.

4555. Important Words :

رجف (shall quake). رجف means, it was or became in a state of commotion, convulsion or disturbance. They say رجفت الارض i.e., the earth quaked. رجف القلب means, the heart became agitated. رجفته الحمى means, the fever caused him to shiver. رجف القوم means, the people prepared for war. (Lane & Aqrab).

8. And a second *quaking* shall follow it.⁴⁵⁵⁶

تَتَّبِعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ۝

9. On that day hearts will tremble,⁴⁵⁵⁷

قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ۝

10. *And* their eyes will be cast down—⁴⁵⁵⁸

أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ ۝

11. They will say, 'Shall we *really* be restored to our former state?'⁴⁵⁵⁹

يَقُولُونَ ءَاِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ۝

12. *b*What! even when we are rotten bones?

ءَاِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا تَخْرَجُ ۝

13. They will say, 'Then that indeed would be a losing return.'

قَالُوا تِلْكَ اِذَا كَرَرْتَ خَاسِرَةٌ ۝

a70 : 45. b17 : 50 ; 36 : 79 ; 46 : 34.

Commentary :

The verse means that the prophecy proclaimed in the foregoing verses will be fulfilled as the result of fighting that will take place between God's righteous servants and the forces of evil in which the latter shall be routed (رجف meaning to prepare for war). The utter defeat of disbelief announced long time beforehand will constitute a strong proof of the Resurrection. The verse may apply to the Day of Reckoning also.

4556. Important Words :

الرَّادِفَةُ (that which follows) is derived from رَدَف which means, it followed or came after. رَدَفَهُمُ الْاَمْرُ means, the event came upon them suddenly so as to overwhelm them (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that once the fighting starts between Muslims and infidels, it will not cease till the forces of evil are fully and finally crushed as the result of successive blows.

4557. Commentary :

When disbelievers will suffer defeats in

quick succession and they will see Islam prevailing and predominating, then will a feeling of disquietude seize them and doubts about the possibility of the Resurrection will begin to assail their minds. They will be led to think that the triumph of Islam which was predicted at a time when the new Faith was engaged in a seemingly hopeless struggle for its very existence, and which was declared to be a piece of evidence in support of the Last Day, had come true. Therefore the Resurrection was also true.

4558. Commentary :

The disbelievers will get the worst of the war and their pride will be humbled into dust.

4559. Important Words :

الحَافِرَةُ (former state) is derived from حَفَرَ i.e., he dug the ground. حَافِرَةٌ means, the original state of a thing; turning back of a thing so that the end thereof is brought back to its beginning. رَجَعَ اِلَى حَافِرَتِهِ i.e., he became old and decrepit. رَجَعَ عَلَى حَافِرَتِهِ means, he returned by the way by which he had gone. The verse means, "shall we be restored to our first state i.e., to life on earth as we were" (Lane & Aqrab).

14. It will only be a single cry,
15. And behold! they will *all come out* in the open.⁴⁵⁶⁰
16. "Has the story of Moses reached thee?⁴⁵⁶¹
17. ^bWhen his Lord called him in the holy Valley of Ṭuwā, *saying*,
18. "Go thou to Pharaoh; he has rebelled.
19. "And say to him, 'Wouldst thou like to be purified?
20. 'And I will guide thee to thy Lord so that thou mayest fear Him."
21. ^dSo he showed him the great Sign,⁴⁵⁶²
22. But he rejected *him* and disobeyed.

فَأَتَيْنَاهَا زَجْرَةً وَاحِدَةً ۝
 فَادَّاهُمُ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ۝
 هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَى ۝
 إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ۝
 اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ۝
 فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ۝
 وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَىٰ ۝
 فَأَرَاهُ الْآيَةَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ۝
 فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَىٰ ۝

^a19 : 52 ; 20 : 10.

^b19 : 53 ; 20 : 12-13 ; 28 : 31.

^c20 : 44.

^d20 : 57.

4560. Commentary :

The reference in the verse seems to be to the Battle of Badr when disbelievers had a foretaste of the crushing defeats which they were destined subsequently to suffer at the hands of Muslims.

4561. Commentary :

Here the Meccan disbelievers are told that they are not the first to reject God's Message. Divine Messengers had come before. They were also rejected, opposed and persecuted. Moses was one of them. He preached the Divine Message to Pharaoh, who courted his own destruction by refusing to listen to the voice of God. The Holy Prophet's opponents

should take a lesson from the ignominious end to which Pharaoh came.

4562. Commentary :

"The great Sign" was the Sign of the Rod, which had precedence over all other Signs of Moses (20 : 21). When confronted with the magic of the magicians it was his rod that swallowed that which the magicians had wrought (20 : 70). When Moses had to cross the sea he was enjoined to strike the sea with his rod (26 : 64); and when he prayed for water for his people he was told to strike the rock with his rod (2 : 61). The Sign of the white hand was shown only after the Sign of the rod (20 : 23).

23. Then he turned away from Moses, striving against him.

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ يَسْعَى ۝٣٦

24. And he gathered his people and proclaimed,

فَوَحَّشَ قُنَادَى ۝٣٧

25. Saying, 'I am your Lord, the Most High.'^a

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى ۝٣٨

26. So Allah seized him with the punishment of the Hereafter and the present world.⁴⁵⁶³

فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَى ۝٣٩

27. Therein surely is a lesson for him who fears his Lord.

يَعْلَمُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَى ۝٤٠

2 28. Are you harder to create or the heaven that He has built?⁴⁵⁶⁴

أَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ السَّمَاءُ بَنَاهَا ۝٤١

^a26 : 30 ; 28 : 39.

4563. Commentary :

The basic doctrine of Islam (in fact of all religions), second in importance only to belief in the existence of God, is belief in life after death. The primary mission of all Divine Prophets was to instil this belief in the minds of men. The Qur'an has given four arguments in support of this belief : (a) Complete knowledge of God about a thing which presupposes His power to create it. (b) Creation and development of man in the mother's womb, from an insignificant sperm-drop into a full-fledged human being. (c) Rising up of a people from the depths of moral degradation to the heights of spiritual glory through a Divine Reformer, such rising, in Quranic terminology, being known as their resurrection. (d) The triumph of a Prophet over his enemies, predicted at a time when the Prophet and his community are fighting for their very life, and the human mind cannot even conceive of a

happy sequel to their efforts. It is to this last argument that reference has been made in the verse under comment.

Incidentally, the verse refers to the double punishment of disbelievers—in this life and in the Hereafter.

4564. Commentary :

The complex, but flawless and consummate, creation of the solar system, constitutes, indeed, an invincible argument about life after death viz., that the Great God Who could bring into being from nothing such a vast universe could also give man, who is but a mere speck in it, a new life after he is dead. This is the purport of the present and the following six verses. The verses further point out that when God has created such a complete system for man's physical needs, He could not have failed to make similar provision for his spiritual needs.

29. ^aHe has raised the height thereof and has made it perfect.⁴⁵⁶⁵

30. And He has made its night dark^b; and has brought forth the morn thereof;⁴⁵⁶⁶

31. And the earth, along with it, He spread forth^c.⁴⁵⁶⁷

32. ^dHe produced therefrom its water and its pasture,

33. ^eAnd the mountains, He made them firm.

34. ^fAll this is a provision for you and for your cattle.

35. ^gBut when the great Calamity comes,⁴⁵⁶⁸

36. ^hThe day when man will call to mind all that he strove for,

رَفَعَ سَنَكَهَا فَسَوَّيَهَا ۝٢٩

وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا ۝٣٠

وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا ۝٣١

أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءَهَا وَمَرْعَاهَا ۝٣٢

وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسَاهَا ۝٣٣

مَتَاءً لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ ۝٣٤

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَةُ الْكُبْرَى ۝٣٥

يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَى ۝٣٦

^a21 : 33 ; 31 : 11.

^b17 : 13.

^c20 : 54 ; 51 : 49.

^d20 : 54 ; 50 : 8.

^e50 : 8.

^f80 : 33.

^g74 : 36 ; 80 : 34.

^h89 : 24.

4565. Commentary :

The verse points to the fact that it is due to the sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies that life exists on earth.

4566. Commentary :

The phenomenon of night and day, which pertains to the earth, has been attributed to the heaven because it is due to the working of the solar system that we have day and night.

4567. Important Words :

دحاها (spread it). دحا الله الارض means, God had spread, expanded or extended the earth. دحا الحجر يده means, he threw or cast the stone with his hand. دحا البطن means, the belly was or became inflated (Lane).

Commentary :

Besides the meaning given in the text the verse

signifies that the earth became cast away from a bigger mass which shows that it was part of a larger planet from which it became separated in the very remote past.

4568. Important Words :

الطامة (Calamity) is derived from طم. They say طم الوادي i.e., the torrent of the valley rose high and predominated. طم الامر means, the affair was or became great or formidable. طمت الفتنة means, the conflict was or became severe. طامة means, a calamity that predominates over others; a formidable thing; a vehement cry that overcomes everything. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Besides the Final Resurrection the reference here may be to the Fall of Mecca which proved to be a great calamity for the Meccans.

37. "And Hell will be made manifest to him who sees."⁴⁵⁶⁹

38. Then, as for him who rebels,

39. And who chooses the life of this world,

40. The fire of Hell shall surely be his abode.

41. ^bBut as for him who fears to stand before his Lord, and restrains his soul from evil desires,⁴⁵⁷⁰

42. The Garden shall surely be his abode.

43. "They ask thee concerning the Hour: 'When will it come?'"

44. Wherein art thou concerned with the declaration of *its coming*?

45. The ultimate *knowledge* of it rests with thy Lord.

46. Thou art only a Warner unto him who fears it.

وَبُرْزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَى ۝

فَأَمَّا مَنْ كُفَّ ۝

وَأَشْرَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۝

فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى ۝

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ

الْهَوَى ۝

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى ۝

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسِيهَا ۝

فِيهِمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا ۝

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهَىٰهَا ۝

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ مَّنْ يَخْشَىٰهَا ۝

^a26 : 92.

^b23 : 58 ; 66 : 47.

^c7 : 188 ; 33 : 64 ; 51 : 13.

4569. Commentary :

Hell has been mentioned twice, in the present verse and in v. 40, signifying the punishment of this world and of the Hereafter. This double punishment is mentioned in v. 26 above in the words نكال الآخرة والاولى i.e.,

punishment of the Hereafter and of the present world.

4570. Commentary :

The verse means: (1) who fears to stand before his Lord as a guilty person; (2) who fears the Majesty of his Lord.

47. ^aOn the day when they see it, it will be as if they had not tarried in the world but an evening or a morn thereof.^{4570-A}

كَانَ هُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ

صُغُرًا ٢٤

^a 10 : 46 ; 30 : 56 ; 46 : 36 ; 79 : 47.

4570-A. Commentary :

It is disbelievers' way that whenever they are warned that they will be overtaken by Divine punishment if they rejected the Divine Message they impudently demand from their Prophet, half mockingly and half in doubt, that he should let them know the exact time when the punishment will take place. In verses 43-46 they are told that knowledge of the time when they would render themselves deserving of God's punishment is within God's own special prerogative;

the Prophet's duty is only to administer a warning to them. But, says the verse, it is not the time, or the place or the manner or the form of the punishment that matters. What matters is that disbelievers should realize that when Divine punishment comes, it will be so swift, sudden and severe that they will feel as if the period of their prosperity and enjoyment was of very short duration, and that the punishment had come too soon. This seems to be the purport of vv. 43-47.

CHAPTER 80

SŪRA 'ABASA

(Revealed before Hijra)

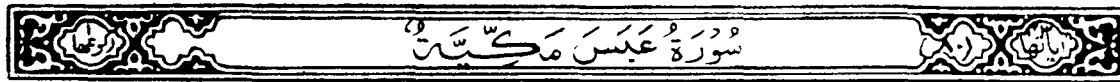
Date of Revelation and Context

This *Sūra*, like the two preceding it, with whose subject-matter it has a close association, is among those *Sūrās* which were revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call. Noldeke and Muir, besides Muslim scholars, subscribe to this view. The *Sūra* takes its title from the opening verse and deals with an incident in the Holy Prophet's life which, though of not much historical importance, contains a lesson of abiding moral significance.

Towards the end of the preceding Chapter, the Holy Prophet was told that his duty was confined to conveying the Divine Message to his people. In the present *Sūra* he is enjoined to be more careful of and pay greater attention to the poor, God-fearing believers who were likely to profit from his preachings more than the conceited and arrogant disbelievers. Moreover, in the previous *Sūra*, it was stated that the knowledge about "the Hour," rested with God; in this *Sūra* it is added that the people who will bring about in themselves a moral resurrection ("the Hour") spoken of in the preceding *Sūra* were known only to God. They are those poor people who are small in the eyes of proud and worldly-minded disbelievers but are great in the sight of God and who in fact, possess all the qualities of leadership.

Subject-Matter

The *Sūra* begins to deal with the incident of 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktūm, a poor blind man, and proceeds to teach the lesson *viz.*, that it is not worldly riches and social status which determine the real worth of a person but the goodness of heart and willingness on his part to listen to Truth and accept it. The *Sūra* also constitutes an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's regard for the susceptibilities of the poor and oppressed people, and proceeds to say that the Qur'ān will raise them to great eminence. It further says that being the last Divine Message for mankind it will be respected and read all over the world and will continue to be protected and preserved. The disbelievers are then warned that they are rejecting this great and glorious Divine Message—the Qur'ān—to their own spiritual detriment, and are so foolish as not to understand that God who created man from an insignificant fluid and then endowed him with great natural powers and faculties and made excellent provision for his physical sustenance, could not have ignored to make similar provision for his moral and spiritual development. He has made this provision by the revelation of His Word for their guidance. The *Sūra* ends on a note of warning to disbelievers that if they rejected the Quranic Message and persisted in opposition to the Prophet they will have to face a day of reckoning when misery, shame and ignominy will be their lot. The righteous believers, however, will reside in "Gardens of Bliss," their faces beaming with Divine joy and happiness.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. "He frowned and turned aside,"⁴⁵⁷¹

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ②

3. Because there came to him the blind man.

أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ③

4. And what makes thee know that he might be seeking to purify himself,⁴⁵⁷²

وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَكَّى ④

^aSee 1 : 1. b74 : 23.

4571. Commentary :

The verse refers to a well-known historical incident. As the Holy Prophet was engaged one day in a talk with some of the Quraish Chiefs about some matters of belief, there came up 'Abdullah ibn Umm Maktūm and, thinking that the Holy Prophet's precious time and energy were being wasted on the confirmed leaders of disbelief, he sought to divert his attention and asked to be enlightened on some religious questions. The Holy Prophet disliked the intrusion, and showed his displeasure by turning aside from 'Abdullah (Ṭabṛī and Bayṣan). The incident, while it showed the Holy Prophet's solicitude for the spiritual well-being of the Quraish leaders, in that he continued his discourse with them and paid no heed to Abdullah's interruption was evidence of his great regard for the tender susceptibilities of the poor blind man, inasmuch as the Prophet merely turned his face from 'Abdullah, an act which the latter could not see, not saying even a word of reproach or disapprobation to him for his inopportune and rash interruption. The verse thus throws a flood of light on the moral stature of the Holy Prophet; and instead of implying a

reproach or rebuke. as some Commentators seem to think, enjoins him and, through him, his followers, to have due regard for the tender susceptibilities of the poor, the humble, and the down-trodden.

The words "he frowned and turned aside," according to most Commentators of the Qur'ān refer to the Holy Prophet, but more correctly they seem to refer to the arrogant attitude of the conceited Quraish leader with whom the Holy Prophet was engaged in conversation and who turned away his face disdainfully, thinking how a humble and lowly person could dare interfere in the talk he was having with the Prophet.

4572. Commentary :

The pronoun "thee" has been taken as applying to the Holy Prophet and the pronoun "he" to the Quraish leader with whom the Holy Prophet was holding conversation. But "thee" may more appropriately be applied to those carping critics who, being hyper-sensitive, would not relish the attitude of the Holy Prophet on that occasion which was the only right and correct attitude for him to adopt.

5. Or he may take heed and the reminder may benefit him?

6. As for him who is disdainfully indifferent.⁴⁵⁷³

7. Unto him thou dost pay attention,⁴⁵⁷⁴

8. Though thou art not responsible if he does not become purified.^{4574-A}

9. But he who comes to thee hastening,

10. And he fears *God*,

11. Him dost thou neglect.⁴⁵⁷⁵

أَوَيْدَ كَرِهْتَ نَفْعَهُ الذِّكْرَى ٥

أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنَى ٦

فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّى ٧

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزْكَى ٨

وَأَمَّا مَنِ جَاءَكَ يُسْعَى ٩

وَهُوَ يَخْشَى ١٠

فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى ١١

4573. Important Words :

استغنى (is disdainfully indifferent) is derived from غنى which means, he became rich. استغنى means, he wanted to be rich. استغنى عنه به means, he became indifferent after he got what he desired. The verse thus means, he desires wealth, or he is indifferent or careless (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See a collective note, on this and the following six verses, on v. 11 below.

4574. Important Words :

تصدى (thou dost pay attention) is derived from صد. They say تصدى له i.e., he addressed or applied or directed himself or his regard or attention or mind to him or it; and he asked him or petitioned him for a thing that he wanted; he inclined towards him or it; he raised head towards him or it (Lane & Aqrab).

4574-A. Commentary :

The verse seems to constitute an effective justification of the Holy Prophet's attitude towards 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktūm. It

purports to say that it would have brought no good to the Holy Prophet if 'Abdullah or, for that matter, the Quraish leader did or did not benefit by his talk. Thus the attitude of fancied indifference towards 'Abdullah or of deference towards the Quraish leader shown by the Holy Prophet proceeded from no consideration of any personal interest. The Holy Prophet's reaction was solely due to compliance with the commandments of the *Shari'at* about behaving kindly and courteously towards one's guests and visitors.

4575. Commentary :

If vv. 6-11 are taken to apply to the Holy Prophet, then the particle أما in the 6th verse would signify "how could it be that" i.e., it cannot be; and these verses would be interpreted as: "How could it be possible that thou shouldst pay attention to him who is disdainfully indifferent and should neglect him who fears God and comes to thee hastening." These verses again constitute an eloquent commentary on the Holy Prophet's regard for the humble and the suppressed. But the verse under comment may be applied more fittingly to those critics

12. Nay! surely it is a Remin-
ler^a.⁴⁵⁷⁶

13. So let him who desires pay heed
to it—

14. Contained in honoured
Books,⁴⁵⁷⁷

15. Exalted, purified,

16. In the hands of writers,⁴⁵⁷⁸

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ۝١٢

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَّرْهُ ۝١٣

فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ۝١٤

مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ۝١٥

بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ۝١٦

^a20 : 4; 73 : 19; 74 : 55.

who would find fault with the Holy Prophet's attitude towards 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktūm on that particular occasion but who themselves, in their conceit and pride, would behave arrogantly towards the poor and the lowly. Thus these verses have been used ironically ; they bring home to the critics their own state of mind ; and do not refer to any weakness of the Holy Prophet. The next verse also supports this interpretation.

4576. Important Words :

كَلَّا (nay) means, nay; by no means; on the contrary. The particle is also used to remonstrate with a person and to tell him that he is saying something which is not correct (Aqrab & Baqā).

Commentary :

The verse means that the charge of indifference is not correct. Moreover, why at all the Prophet should have adopted an attitude of sullen indifference towards a poor man when the Qur'ān, being meant equally for the rich and the poor, it was not only incon-

sistent with his own high moral stature but also against human reason to do so? What the Prophet did on the specific occasion was dictated by the exigency of the occasion and was demanded by the situation and, therefore, was the right thing to do.

4577. Commentary :

The Qur'ān being a compendium of all permanent and imperishable teachings which are embodied in various revealed Scriptures, constitutes, as it were, a collection of all heavenly Books. This is the significance of the words "Contained in honoured Books." The verse further says that the Qur'ān will be written in the form of a Book, will be honoured and respected and will be protected and preserved against every kind of interpolation and interference.

4578. Important Words :

سَفَرَةٍ (writers) is derived from سَفَرَ which means, he travelled. They say سَفَرَ الْكِتَابَ i.e., he wrote the book. سَفَرَ الصَّبْحِ means, the morning shone forth (Lane & Aqrab).

17. Noble and virtuous.⁴⁵⁷⁹ كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ۝١٨
18. Ruin seize man! how ungrateful he is!⁴⁵⁸⁰ قَتَلَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا اكْفَرَهُ ۝١٩
19. From what does He create him? مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ۝٢٠
20. "From a sperm-drop! He creates him and proportions him;⁴⁵⁸¹ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ ۝٢١
21. Then He makes the way easy for him, ثُمَّ السَّيْلَ يَسَّرَهُ ۝٢٢
22. Then He causes him to die and assigns a grave to him;⁴⁵⁸² ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ۝٢٣
23. Then, when He pleases, He will raise him up again.⁴⁵⁸³ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنشُرَهُ ۝٢٤

^a18 : 38; 35 : 12; 36 : 78; 40 : 68.

4579. Commentary :

As against three prominent characteristics of the Qur'ān mentioned in the preceding vv. 12-15 above, three equally marked qualities of the bearers of its Message have been mentioned in this and the preceding verse. The bearers of the Quranic Message are not only noble and virtuous but travel far and wide to explain and spread it.

4580. Commentary :

How ungrateful are disbelievers, says the verse, that they should reject such a great and noble Book as the Qur'ān which has been revealed to raise them from the dust and squalor of moral turpitude to the heights of spiritual glory.

4581. Commentary :

The verse draws pointed attention to the very humble beginning of man, so that it may be brought home to him that God having created him from such an insignificant thing as a sperm-

drop, did not endow him with an infinite capacity for progress or did not reveal the Qur'ān for his guidance, for nothing. Man has been created to pursue a noble ideal and achieve a great goal.

4582. Commentary :

The natural powers with which man has been endowed signify that a very high spiritual destiny awaits him. But the physical body of man is too dense for an immeasurable and unending spiritual progress. To achieve his high destiny, God has decreed death for man, so that when the human soul is freed from the trammels of its physical tabernacle it should travel on the path leading to the goal of its infinite progress.

The 'grave' in this verse does not mean the tomb to which a dead body is consigned, but the state of the soul after death.

4583. Commentary :

Man's humble and insignificant beginning, his having been endowed with marvellous natural powers, his death—all this shows (says the

24. Nay! he has not yet done what
He commanded him *to do*.⁴⁵⁸⁴

25. Now let man look at his food:

26. "How We pour down water in
abundance,

27. Then We cleave the earth—a
proper cleaving—

28. ^bThen We cause to grow there-
in grain,

29. And grapes and vegetables,

30. And the olive and the date-
palm.

31. ^cAnd walled gardens thickly
planted,

32 And fruits and herbage,

33. ^dProvision for you and your
cattle.⁴⁵⁸⁵

34. ^eBut when the deafening Shout
comes,⁴⁵⁸⁶

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ^ط

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ^ز

إِنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا^ح

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا^د

فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا^ر

وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا^ز

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا^ح

وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا^د

وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا^ر

مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ^ط

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاعَةُ^ز

^a71 : 12; 78 : 15.

^b78 : 16.

^c78 : 17.

^d79 : 34.

^e79 : 35.

verse) that death is not the end of man but
that there is a life beyond.

4584. Commentary :

Though God endowed man with great natural
faculties and revealed Himself to him through
His Messengers and Heavenly Scriptures, yet
unregenerate man fails to carry out the purpose
of his creation which the Qur'ān has summarised
in the words : مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ
i.e., man has been created to develop Divine
attributes and imbue himself with Divine
personality.

4585. Commentary :

These verses (vv. 25-33) contain a beautiful

description of the consummate arrangement that
God has made for the physical sustenance of
man, and from it the moral is drawn that when
God has made so complete and full a provision
for man's temporary and limited life, He could
not have omitted to make a similar provision
for his everlasting spiritual life, and further
that if there was no life after death, God would
not have made such consummate arrangement.

4586. Commentary :

The word الصَّاعَةُ (the deafening Shout)
signifies that as disbelievers turned a deaf ear
to Quranic teaching, the punishment that will

35. "On the day when a man flees from his brother,

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ۝

36. And *from* his mother and his father,

وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ ۝

37. And *from* his wife ^band his sons,

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ ۝

38. Every man among them that day will have concern enough to make him indifferent *to others*.⁴⁵⁸⁷

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ۝

39. "On that day *some* faces will be bright.

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُسْفِرَةٌ ۝

40. Laughing, joyous!

صَاحِكَةٌ مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ۝

41. ^dAnd *some* faces, on that day, will have dust upon them,

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ۝

42. "Darkness covering them.

تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ۝

43. Those are the disbelievers, doers of evil.⁴⁵⁸⁸

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ ۝

^a44 : 42. ^b70 : 13. ^c3 : 107; 10 : 27. ^d68 : 44; 75 : 25; 88 : 3-4. ^e14 : 51; 23 : 105.

be inflicted upon them will take the form of "a deafening Shout."

4587. Commentary :

In time of tribulation and sorrow a man is apt to forget even his nearest relations. He has his own troubles to keep him occupied. Such will be the condition of disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection. The advent of the Holy Prophet has also been likened to "resurrection" in the Qur'ān, as also the advent of every great Divine Reformer. With the advent of a Divine Messenger a wide gulf intervenes between believers and disbelievers, however closely related they may be. It is to this unpalatable truth that Jesus referred when he said :

I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, young wife against her mother-in-law.. (Matt. 10 : 35).

4588. Important Words :

كُفْرَةٌ is plural of كَافِرٌ which being act. part. from كَفَرَ means: (1) one who disbelieves in the Divine Message; (2) one who conceals a thing (Aqrab).

فَجَرَةٌ is plural of فَاجِرٌ which is act. part. from فَجَرَ and means: (1) one who turns away from truth; (2) a false swearer of oaths; (3) a rejector and disbeliever of Divine Commandments; (4) a shameless fellow; and (5) one whose affair has become spoilt (Lane & Aqrab).

CHAPTER 81

SURA AL-TAKWIR

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

The *Sūra* takes its title from the word كَوَّرَتْ (is folded up), occurring in the opening verse. It was revealed early at Mecca, very probably in the 6th year of the Call or even earlier. The preceding *Sūrās* had dealt with the subject of Final Resurrection and with the great and marvellous revolution which was brought about by the Holy Prophet and which has been called "resurrection" in the Qur'ān. This resurrection was to take place twice, first by the advent of the Holy Prophet himself and the revelation of the Qur'ān, and second by his Second Coming in the person of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī to which a clear reference is made in 62 : 4. It is this second renaissance of Islam at the hands of the Promised Messiah, and the great changes which were to take place in his time in the world, which this *Sūra* speaks of. The *Sūra* opens with a description of those changes, and follows it up with a fleeting reference to the moral degeneration of Muslims at that time and to the causes thereof, and ends with striking a note of optimism and cheerfulness to the Muslims, holding out the promise that eventually the night of degradation of Muslims will give place to the dawn of success, because Islam, being God's last Message for the whole of mankind, has come to stay.



1. "In the name of Allah the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the sun is wrapped up,⁴⁵⁸⁹

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ②

3. And when the stars are obscured,⁴⁵⁹⁰

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ③

^aSee 1:1.

4589. Important Words :

كورت (wrapped up) is derived from كور . They say كور العمامة i.e., he wound round the turban upon his head. كورت الشمس means, the light of the sun became folded up or became dim or it disappeared or the sun became eclipsed (Aqrab). اذا الشمس كورت means, when the sun shall be wound with darkness like a turban; or when it shall be wrapped up and have its light taken away or shall lose its light; or shall be divested of its light; or shall be cast away. These are some of the meanings of the verse given by Jalālīn, Qatādah, 'Ikrama and Mujāhid as quoted by Lane.

Commentary :

It is generally said that this *Sūra* deals with the Resurrection, when the laws and processes of nature as we know them, will cease to operate. But this does not appear to be plausible, the whole trend and tenor of the *Sūra* speaks so patently of the conditions which obtain in the physical world that some of the verses will lose all sense if they are taken as referring to the Final Resurrection. In fact, the *Sūra* speaks of the great changes that have taken place in the material world and in human life since the time of the Holy Prophet, particularly in our own time. The *Sūra* thus makes a special

reference to the present era—the era of the Promised Messiah. Some verses may equally be interpreted literally as well as metaphorically.

The Holy Prophet is described in the Qur'ān as the bright sun (25 : 62). The verse, therefore, may mean: When there will be spiritual darkness all over the world—the light of the Spiritual Sun having become dim or having disappeared altogether. Or the verse may refer to the eclipse of the sun and the moon, which according to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, was to take place in the time of the Mahdī, a phenomenon that the world had never witnessed before (Quṭnī, p. 188). A reference to this is also to be found in 75 : 10. This predicted eclipse of the sun and the moon took place in 1894 in the month of Ramaḍān.

4590. Commentary :

The word النجوم meaning stars, signifies religious *ulema*. The well-known *ḥadīth* أصحابي كالنجوم بأيهم اقتديتم اهتديتم i.e. My Companions are like stars, whomsoever you will follow, you will receive right guidance (Baihaquī), supports this meaning. In this sense of the word, the verse means: "When religious leaders become corrupt, and cease to exercise any influence." Literally, the verse means: "When stars fall in large

4. "And when the mountains are made to move,⁴⁵⁹¹

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝

5. And when the she-camels, ten months with young, are abandoned.⁴⁵⁹²

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۝

6. And when the beasts are gathered together,⁴⁵⁹³

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۝

418 : 48; 52 : 11; 78 : 21.

numbers." This may be a reference to the falling of stars in exceptionally large numbers in 1885 when the Promised Messiah, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, had already announced his claim to be a Divine Reformer.

4591. Important Words :

سار (made to move) is derived from سار *i.e.*, he or it went, passed away or departed. سيره من بلده means, he expelled him from his town (Lane & Aqrab).

الجبال (mountains) is plural of جبل which means, a mountain; a man who does not move from his place *i.e.*, a big man; the chief of a people; a learned man (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse means: When mountains will be blown away by dynamite and roads will be made through them; or (metaphorically) when men wielding great authority and influence will be expelled from their own countries; or when the authority of rulers will become undermined.

4592. Important Words :

عشار (she-camels, ten months with young) is the plural of عشاء which means, a she-camel that has been ten months with young. عشار is applied to she-camels until some of them have brought forth and others are expected to bring forth. Such she-camels were

considered to be a very valuable possession by the Arabs (Lane & Aqrab).

عطلت (are abandoned) is derived from عطل . They say عطل الاجير *i.e.*, the hired man was without occupation. عطل الشئى (atṭala) means, he left the thing unattended or neglected. عطل البئر means, he left off going to the well for taking water (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the replacement of camels by better and swifter means of transport—railway trains, steamships, motor cars, aeroplanes, etc. Or the verse may signify that, in Promised Mahdi's time, camels—she-camels ten months with young—will lose their importance, even in Arabia. There is a pointed reference to camels being replaced by other means of transport in a saying of the Holy Prophet which is to the effect: وليتركن القلاص *i.e.*, the camels will be abandoned and will not be used for going from one place to another (Muslim).

4593. Important Words :

حشرت (gathered together) is passive voice in the fem. gen. from حشر . They say حشر الناس *i.e.*, he collected the people. حشر الجمع means, he drove the people from one place to another. حشره عن وطنه means, he banished him from his native country. حشرت الوحوش means, the wild beasts died or were destroyed (Lane).

7. "And when the seas are made to flow forth *one into the other*,⁴⁵⁹⁴

8. And when people are brought together,⁴⁵⁹⁵

9. And when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about,

10. 'For what crime was she killed?'⁴⁵⁹⁶

وَإِذَا الْبَحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۝

وَإِذَا النَّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءِدَةُ سُيِّلَتْ ۝

بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ۝

452 : 7 ; 82 : 4.

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of the root-word حشر the verse would signify : When animals will be collected in zoos or when primitive people will be settled in organized, civil communities; or when they will be compelled to leave their homelands, as the natives in Uganda and the Kenya Colony, etc., were told to till their lands or go out; or when they will be destroyed as the Red Indians in the United States of America and the aborigines in Australia and New Zealand, etc. have been practically annihilated.

4594. Important Words :

البحار (seas) is the plural of بحر which means, a sea; a great river; a spacious place comprising a large quantity of water. It is also the plural of بحرة which means, a town or village (Lane & Aqrab).

سجرت (made to flow forth). They say سجر الماء النهر i.e., the water filled the stream. سجر الماء (sajjara) means, he made the water to flow forth whithersoever it would. Thus إذا البحار سجرت means : When the seas are filled; when the rivers are made to flow into one another; when the seas will be set on fire; when the seas will meet together and become one;

when towns or cities will swell with their populations (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of the words سجت and البحار given under Important Words the verse signifies: When the waters of rivers will be drained away for irrigation and other purposes, and rivers will be linked up together for these purposes; when in sea-fights very large ships will be set on fire and it would seem as if the seas were on fire; when large oceans will be joined together by means of canals; when rural population will go into towns and cities and they will overflow with their inhabitants.

4595. Commentary :

The verse means : When the means of transport and communication will become so developed and when intercourse between peoples living in far off lands will become so easy and frequent as to make them unite into one people. Or the verse may signify that people holding analogous social or political views will form themselves into "parties." The reference may be to Labour, Communist, Nazi and Fascist Parties.

4596. Commentary :

The burying or burning alive of girls will be declared a capital crime.

11. And when books are spread abroad,⁴⁵⁹⁷

وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ۝

12. And when the heaven is laid bare,⁴⁵⁹⁸

وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ۝

13. And when Hell is set ablaze,⁴⁵⁹⁹

وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ۝

14. "And when Paradise is brought nigh,⁴⁶⁰⁰

وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُرْفِقتْ ۝

15. ^bThen every soul will know what it has produced.⁴⁶⁰¹

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ۝

^{a2} : 91; 50 : 32 ^{b3} : 31; 82 : 6.

4597. Commentary :

The reference clearly seems to be to the vast circulation of newspapers, journals, and books ~~and to the~~ system of libraries and reading rooms and such other places and means of spreading knowledge in the Latter Days—in the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī.

4598. Important Words :

كشط الشيئ (laid bare). كشط الشيئ means, he removed, took off or stripped off from the thing what had covered it. كشطت البعير means, I skinned the camel. كشط روعه means, his fright was removed (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to the vast strides that the science of astronomy has made in the Latter Days. The advance in this branch of science during the past decade has startled the world.

The verse also signifies that with the advent of the Promised Messiah the doors of spiritual sciences will be thrown wide open.

4599. Commentary :

On account of the sinful and iniquitous behaviour of man, God's wrath will be kindled, and a veritable Hell will be let

loose upon the world in the form of destructive wars in which all that human civilization has achieved will be consumed in the fire caused by shots, shells and bombs. Mankind had a foretaste of this Hell "let loose" in the last two World Wars, and the world now stands in terrible fright of a third war, compared to which the last Two Wars would appear to be mere child's play, and which will reduce to ashes all human achievements.

4600. Commentary :

As in the Latter Days evil will abound and man will abandon himself to vice and the worship of Mammon, even a small act of righteousness will make him deserving of great reward and will draw him closer to Heaven.

The verse may also mean that God will reveal Himself through the Reformer of the day and so many Signs and miracles will be shown by him, that Reality will be easy to realize, and Paradise, as it were, will be brought near to man.

4601. Commentary :

The verse means that fulfilment of prophecies mentioned in the foregoing verse

16. Nay! I call to witness the planets
that recede,⁴⁶⁰²

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالْخُنُسِ ۙ

17. Go ahead *and then* hide.⁴⁶⁰³

الْجَوَارِ الْكُنُسِ ۙ

18. And *I call to witness* the night
as it passes away,⁴⁶⁰⁴

وَالْيَلِ إِذَا عَسَّسَ ۙ

19. "And the dawn as it begins to
breathe,⁴⁶⁰⁵

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ۙ

474 : 35.

will serve as a strong proof that life after death is a certain reality. Or it may signify that God's special decree will come into force and the punishment of man's evil deeds will take the form of wide-spread calamities and miseries.

4602. Important Words :

الخُنُس (those that recede) is the plural of خُنَس which is act. part. from خَنَس . They say خَنَس عنه *i.e.*, he drew back; receded; retracted or held back from it or him خُنَس الكوكب means, the star receded or became hidden or concealed in the day time. خُنَاس means, a sneaking whisperer; one who whispers an evil suggestion and then stealthily retires and conceals himself (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See next verse.

4603. Important Words :

الْكُنُس (those that hide) is the plural of كُنَس which is act. part. from كَنَس which means, it entered into its cave or hiding place among the trees. كُنَسَت النجوم means, the stars hid themselves in their places of setting; or continued their course and then departed returning or became stationary in their revolving (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In the preceding verse it was stated

that in the Latter Days—in the time of the Promised Messiah—Muslims will begin to decline from their position of eminence. This verse gives some of the reasons that will lead to their decline and downfall, *viz.*, that they will either rush forward headlong thoughtlessly for the carrying out of their contemplated programmes; or will give up all creative and constructive efforts in despair.

4604. Important Words :

عَسَّس (passes away) means, he went round by night to guard the people; he made search by night after suspected persons. عَسَّسَ اللَّيْل means, the night came on with its darkness; the night departed; the night was dark (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

This and the next verse mean that with the advent of the Promised Messiah, the night of moral decline and degradation of Muslims will begin to depart, giving place to the dawn of a great and glorious future for Islam.

4605. Important Words :

تَنَفَّس (begins to breathe) is derived from نَفَس which means, he breathed. نَفَسَ الصُّبْح means, the morning advanced so that it became noon or it extended so that it became clear, bright, cheerful, etc. (Aqrab).

20. "That this is surely the *revealed* word of a noble Messenger,^{4605-A}

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. Possessor of power, established in the persence of the Lord of the Throne,⁴⁶⁰⁶

ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Obeyed "there," and faithful to his trust.⁴⁶⁰⁷

مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. ^bAnd your companion is not mad.⁴⁶⁰⁸

وَمَا صَاحِبُكُمْ يَبْجُنُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. And he assuredly saw him on the clear horizon^c.⁴⁶⁰⁹

وَلَقَدْ سَرَاهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢٤﴾

^a69 : 41. ^b34 : 47 ; 52 : 30. ^c53 : 8.

4605-A. Commentary :

The verse signifies that though the prediction that after the decline of Islam had touched its nadir it will again come to its own, may seem to be a far cry, it shall certainly be fulfilled because the prediction is embodied in the revealed Word of God, spoken through the mouth of a noble Messenger.

The words "a noble Messenger" refer to the Holy Prophet and not to Arch-angel Gabriel as generally misunderstood.

4606. Commentary :

The verse embodies yet another mighty prophecy, viz., that the Holy Prophet will triumph over his enemies.

4607. Important Words :

ثَمَّ means, there ; yonder; syn. هُنَاكَ . It is a noun of indication denoting a place that is remote from the speaker (Lane).

Elsewhere the Qur'ān says with respect to the Holy Prophet: "And We sent not a Messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission" (4 : 65). In the verse under comment it is added that he is also أَمِين i.e., when the Holy Prophet will come to gain great power he will not lose his balance of mind, but will have proper

regard for other peoples' rights and will give everyone his due. This word may also refer to the well-known title by which the Holy Prophet was known among his compatriots. All the five attributes—noble Messenger, possessor of power, enjoying a high rank before the Lord of the Throne, the one obeyed, and faithful to his trust in the sight of God, quite fittingly apply to the Holy Prophet.

4608. Commentary :

The verse clearly shows that vv. 20-22 apply to the Holy Prophet and not to Gabriel as wrongly understood by certain Commentators of the Qur'ān.

4609. Commentary :

The pronoun "هُ" may mean "it" or "him." In the first place it may signify the fulfilment of the prophecy about the glorious future of Islam. In the second, it may refer to the Holy Prophet himself, meaning that the Holy Prophet saw himself in the distant East in the person of the Promised Messiah.

The words الْاُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ meaning the side of the East, the verse not only points to a remote

25. And he is not niggardly with respect to the unseen.⁴⁶¹⁰

26. "Nor is this the word of Satan, the rejected.

27. Whither, then, are you going?⁴⁶¹¹

28. ^bIt is nothing but a Reminder unto all the worlds,⁴⁶¹²

29. Unto such among you as desire to go straight,

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٌ ۚ

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ ۙ

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ ۖ

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ۚ

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ۚ

^a26 : 211.

^b12 : 105; 38 : 88.

future but to the distant East where the foundations for the renaissance of Islam would be laid through the Holy Prophet in his Second Coming in the person of the Promised Messiah.

4610. Important Words :

ضَنِينٌ (niggardly) is derived from ضَن. They say ضَنَ بِهِ *i.e.*, he was or became niggardly of it. ضَنِينٌ means, niggardly; tenacious, stingy; or avaricious (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that it is not only the prophecy about the dawn of a glorious future of Islam in a far-off eastern country which the Prophet has made, but God has disclosed to the world many other very weighty secrets of the unknown from the mouth of the Holy Prophet.

The fulfilment of the prophecies will prove that their origin is Divine.

4611. Commentary :

The verse drives home to disbelievers the untenability of their position and asks them in forcible terms whether in view of very solid and strong arguments, given in the above verses about the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim as a Messenger of God, is it possible for them, consistently with honesty, reason and common sense, to reject his Message?

4612. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the Qur'ān is a safe guidance for men of all temperaments, dispositions, aptitudes, and of every age, clime and status, if only they are honest seekers after truth.

30. "And you desire not *a thing* except that Allah, the Lord of the worlds, desires *it*."⁴⁶¹³

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ

الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

^a18 : 40 ; 74 : 57 ; 76 : 31.

4613. Commentary :

The verse along with the one preceding it may mean : (1) He alone would be guided to the right path who makes an attempt to find it and conforms his will to the will of God.

(2) It is only when God's decree comes into operation and He manifests His will by sending down guidance that men feel an inward urge to discover and walk on the right path.

CHAPTER 82

SŪRA AL-INFITĀR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūra* is so similar in style and subject-matter to the one preceding it that it forms, as it were, its counterpart, with this difference that it lays special emphasis on the signs concerning Christianity of the present time. It is characteristic of the Qur'ān that, in view of their importance, it takes out certain parts of the text of a *Sūra* and gives them a distinct name and individuality, in order to draw pointed attention to the subject dealt with in the separated verses and in order also that the separated parts may be easily committed to memory. The *Sūra*, as mentioned above, deals particularly with the conditions obtaining in the Latter Days when Christian doctrines and ways of life were to impress very deeply the conduct and concepts of non-Christian peoples, especially the Muslims. All the prophecies mentioned in the *Sūra* have been literally fulfilled. The *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call about the time of the revelation of the preceding Chapter. It takes its name from the word انفطرت in the opening verse.

سُورَةُ الْاِنْفِطَارِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٨٢)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWhen the heaven is cleft asunder,⁴⁶¹⁴

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ②

3. And when the stars are scattered,⁴⁶¹⁵

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انتَثَرَتْ ③

4. ^eAnd when the oceans are made to flow forth *and are joined together*,⁴⁶¹⁶

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b73 : 19.

^e52 : 7 ; 81 : 7.

4614. Commentary :

As mentioned in the Introduction, the *Sūra* deals particularly with the time when Christianity would be very much in the ascendant, and Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Sonship of Jesus Christ would reign supreme. To this dominance of Christian beliefs the Qur'ān has referred in very strong language in the words : "The heavens might well-nigh be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, because they ascribe a son to the Gracious God" (19 : 91-92). The verse under comment thus signifies that at that time false doctrines of Christianity would dominate the world, and as a result of it God's wrath would be excited and Divine punishment would overtake the world in various forms. The reference is clearly to the present time.

The verse may also signify that God's righteous servants would feel so grieved at seeing sin and iniquity spreading all round in the world as a result of false Christian doctrines that their hearts would, as it were, become rent; the word "heavens" referring to the hearts

of the righteous believers which in religious phraseology are called God's Throne.

4615. Commentary :

Metaphorically, the verse means that in the Latter Days men possessing true spiritual knowledge and guidance would disappear or become rare. The difference in the words in this and the corresponding verse of the preceding *Surā* is significant. Whereas the verse under comment signifies that wealthy people and skilled handicraftsmen would yield place to Labour and Communist organisations, the corresponding verse of the preceding *Sūra* meant that old aristocratic Houses would lose their influence and prestige.

4616. Commentary :

The verse signifies that great seas and oceans would be made to flow into one another by means of canals; or their mouths would be dug wide open so as to make large ships ply in them. The reference may be to the Panama and Suez Canals. The substitution of the word فُجِّرَتْ in the present verse for سَجَرَتْ in the 7th verse of the preceding *Sūra* is also worthy of note.

5. ^aAnd when the graves are laid open,⁴⁶¹⁷

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝

6. ^bEvery soul shall *then* know what it has sent forth and what it has kept back.⁴⁶¹⁸

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ۝

7. O man! what has deceived thee and emboldened thee against thy Gracious Lord,⁴⁶¹⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ۝

8. ^cWho created thee, then perfected thee, then proportioned thee aright ?⁴⁶²⁰

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۝

^a100 : 10.

^b3 : 31 ; 81 : 15.

^c87 : 3 ; 91 : 8.

4617. Commentary :

The verse may signify that in the Latter Days graves will be laid open as has been done in the case of the tombs of the ancient Kings of Egypt; or it may mean that towns and monuments submerged and long forgotten would be dug out. These verses (2-5) may also refer to the great spiritual revolution brought about by the Holy Prophet. In this case "the cleaving asunder of the heaven" would signify that the gates of heaven would be thrown open and heavenly Signs in support of the Holy Prophet would appear in large numbers. And "the scattering of the stars" would mean that the Companions of the Holy Prophet would spread out in the world and scatter the seeds of the Quranic Message far and wide. "The flowing forth of the rivers" would signify that the rivers of Quranic knowledge would be made to flow and would fertilize the land that had lain dry and parched for long centuries. And "the laying open of the graves" would mean that through the teachings of Islam the spiritually dead people would receive a new life and, as it were, come out of their graves. Or the verse may mean that the earth would throw out its treasures of mineral wealth.

4618. Commentary :

In this and the next few verses the address is

to the protagonists and propagandists of the false Christian doctrines. They will come to realize the enormity and heinousness of their false teaching.

4619. Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to preachers of the false doctrines of Christianity and may imply a subtle rebuke to them, saying in effect : How could they dare invent such self-contradictory doctrines as those of Atonement and the Sonship of Jesus, describing God as a loving Father and at the same time accusing Him of condemning an innocent man—"His own so-called son," that he might wash away the sins of corrupt humanity ?

4620. Commentary :

The verse contains a refutation of Atonement. It purports to say that man is not born sinful and he does not stand in need of the vicarious sacrifice of anybody for his redemption. Instead of being born sinful, he has been endowed with great natural powers and faculties in order that he may rise to the highest peaks of spiritual eminence. The verse may also signify that God revealed His guidance in every age in the form best suited to man's needs.

9. In whatever form He pleased,
He fashioned thee.

10. Nay, but you deny the Judgment.⁴⁶²¹

11. ^aBut there are guardians over you,

12. ^bNoble recorders,⁴⁶²²

13. Who know *all* that you do.⁴⁶²³

14. ^cVerily, the virtuous will be in Bliss;

15. ^dAnd the wicked will be in Hell;

16. ^eThey will burn therein on the Day of Judgment;

17. And they will not *be able to* escape therefrom.

18. And what should make thee know what the Day of Judgment is!⁴⁶²⁴

19. Again, what should make thee know what the Day of Judgment is!

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ ۝٩

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِالَّذِينَ ۝١٠

وَأَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ۝١١

كَرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ۝١٢

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝١٣

إِنَّ الْآبِرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ۝١٤

وَأَنَّ الْفَجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ ۝١٥

يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝١٦

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبِينَ ۝١٧

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝١٨

ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝١٩

^a6 : 62. ^b43 : 81; 50 : 19. ^c45 : 31; 83 : 23. ^d83 : 8. ^e23 : 104 ; 83 : 17.

4621. Commentary :

Christians are here told that by their false doctrines they, in fact, deny the Last Judgment, that is to say, man's responsibility for his actions and his accountability before God. The doctrine of Atonement and man's sinful birth directly negative man's freedom of action and responsibility.

4622. Commentary :

See 50 : 18—19.

4623. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that man is born fully free and is responsible for the decisions he takes and for the deeds he does, which are recorded by "noble recorders."

4624. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse again signify that man will be punished and rewarded according to his actions and that the vicarious sacrifice of no one will be of any use to him.

20. "The day when a soul shall have no power to do aught for another soul! ^bAnd the command on that day will be Allah's *alone*.⁴⁶²⁵

يَوْمَ لَا تَنَالُكَ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ
لِإِلَهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَلَهُ ۥ

^a2 : 124 ; 31 : 34. ^b18 : 45 ; 40 : 17.

4625. **Commentary :**

The verse constitutes an emphatic repudiation of the doctrine of Atonement. It purports to say that every person shall have to carry his own cross and to answer for his actions. Only God's Mercy and Grace can help him on the Day of Reckoning, and not anyone's suffering or sacrifice.

Applied to this life, the verse may be

taken to hold a message of solace and good cheer to the followers of Islam. They are consoled and comforted that they should not be discouraged by the temporary glory and ascendancy of Christian doctrines and political power. The day is fast approaching when the kingdom of God would be established on earth and Islam would come into its own after routing false Christian doctrines.

CHAPTER 83

SŪRA AL-TATFĪF

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

The *Sūra* opens with a severe condemnation of the use of false measures and weights for the purpose of defrauding others. It takes its title from the word مطففين which means "who give short measure." According to scholarly opinion, it was revealed early in the Meccan period. Noldeke and Muir assign its revelation to about the fourth year of the Call.

The preceding *Sūra* had ended with a warning to disbelievers that they will have to render account of their deeds and will have to make up their spiritual loss themselves, and that the sacrifice or intercession of no one else would be of any use to them on the Day of Judgment. In that *Sūra* man's relations with his Creator were discussed, particularly the grave injustice perpetrated by Christians in relation to Divine attributes, in that they have set up a weak human being as God and have invented other untenable doctrines. In the present *Sūra* stress has been laid on man's dealings with his fellow-beings, with special reference to the cruel exploitation by Christian Powers of weaker and less developed nations after depriving them of their liberty of action. The *Sūra* ends on a note of stern warning to the unjust and dishonest people that they will not be allowed to go unpunished. The Day of Reckoning awaits them in all its frightfulness and severity.

سُورَةُ التَّطْفِيفِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٨٣)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bWoe unto those who give short measure;⁴⁶²⁶

وَيْلٌ لِّلْطَافِقِينَ ②

3. Those who, when they take by measure from other people, take it full;

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ③

4. ^cBut when they give by measure to others or weigh to them, they give *them* less.

وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ④

5. Do not such *people* know that they will be raised again⁴⁶²⁷

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ ⑤

6. Unto an awful day,⁴⁶²⁸

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ⑥

7. The day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ⑦

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b11 : 85 ; 26 : 182—184 ; 55 : 9. ^c55 : 10.

4626. Important Words :

المطففين (those who give short measure) is derived from طفف which means, he made defective and deficient. طفف على عياله means, he was niggardly to his family. طفف المكيال means, he gave short measure and short weight. طفيف means, little in quantity; also base, low, vile, mean; paltry or contemptible (Lane).

Commentary :

The word المطففين has been used here in a general sense. Stress is laid on honesty, justice and equity in all sorts of dealings with men. See Introduction to the *Sūra*.

4627. Commentary :

In the hey-day of their power and prosperity

nations, like individuals, are apt to forget the most sure and certain truth writ large on the face of history that sin and injustice never go unpunished. There is a Day of Reckoning in the after-life, when men shall have to render account of their actions to their Lord and Master, but a day of reckoning comes upon a people in this very life, when their evil doings exceed legitimate bounds and they meet their Nemesis.

4628. Commentary :

"An awful day," besides referring to the Last Day of Judgment, signifies the day of reckoning when a whole people are punished for their sins of omission and commission. Their power and glory depart and they sink into the depths of misery and degradation.

8. "Nay! the record of the wicked is in Sijjīn."⁴⁶²⁹

9. And what should make thee know what Sijjīn is?^{4629-A}

10. It is a Book written comprehensively.⁴⁶³⁰

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينٍ ۝

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سِجِّينٌ ۝

كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ ۝

^a45 : 29 ; 68 : 16.

The history of mankind is the story of the rise of different peoples at different times to the dizzy heights of grandeur and prosperity and of their day of reckoning when they sink into oblivion.

to an inquiry in the past tense, thus making the answer definite and certain. The latter expression is invariably followed by the word *لعل* which connotes that the answer is vague and indefinite.

4629. Important Words :

سِجِّين (Sijjīn) is wrongly considered by some Commentators of the Qur'ān as a non-Arabic word. According to such eminent authorities as Farrā', Zajjāj, Abū 'Ubaidah and Mubarrad, it is an Arabic word derived from the root *سجن* (*sajana*). Lisān considers it as equivalent to *سجن* (*sijn*) meaning, a prison. *سِجِّين* is a register or book in which the record of evil deeds of the wicked is said to be kept in the next world. The word also means, anything hard, vehement and severe; continuous, lasting or everlasting (Lane & Aqrab).

4629-A. Commentary :

It is worthy of note that two expressions of almost identical import have been used in the Qur'ān, viz., *مَا أَدْرَاكَ* and *مَا يَدْرِيكَ*, both meaning, "what should make thee know." The former expression is used in answer

4630. Important Words :

كِتَاب means, a book; a record or register; a revealed Scripture; Divine decree; judgment or sentence, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of different significations of *سِجِّين* and *كِتَاب*, the verse under comment, along with v. 8, would signify that the register in which the record of the evil deeds of the wicked are kept is known by the name *سِجِّين* i.e., the name of the book would show that their punishment would be severe and lasting. Or the verse may mean that the wicked will be kept in a place of disgrace and ignominy and this is an irrevocable decision. Or *سِجِّين* and *عَلِينَ* may be the names of two portions of the Qur'ān, the former dealing with the wicked rejectors of the Divine Message and with the punishments to be meted out to them, and the latter with the righteous servants of God and the rewards to be bestowed upon them. Thus the meaning of the verse would be that the verdicts recorded in these two portions cannot be recalled and so cannot be altered or changed.

11. Woe, on that day, unto those who reject,

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ۝

12. Who deny the Day of Judgment.

الَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝

13. And none denies it save every sinful transgressor,

وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ۝

14. ^aWho, when Our Signs are recited unto him, says: 'Fables of the ancients!'

إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝

15. Nay, but that which they have earned has rusted their hearts.⁴⁶³¹

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝

16. ^bNay, they will surely be debarred from *seeing* their Lord on that day.⁴⁶³²

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّحَجُوبُونَ ۝

17. ^cThen, verily, they will burn in Hell,

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ۝

18. ^dThen it will be said *to them*, 'This is what you used to reject.'

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ۝

^a8 : 32 ; 16 : 25 ; 68 : 16.

^b3 : 78.

^c23 : 104; 82 : 16.

^d52 : 15.

4631. Important Words :

ران (has rusted). ران الثوب means, the garment was or became rusty or covered with rust, dust, or filth. ران هواه على قلبه means, his evil desire covered or overcame his heart. رين means, rust that overspreads the sword; dirt, filth or soil (Lane & Aqrab).

4632. Commentary :

The sight of God is granted to a believer in two stages. The first stage is that of belief, when the believer acquires a firm faith in the Divine attributes. This is the initial stage. The second or the higher stage consists in his being granted realization of the

Divine Being. This stage is achieved after one has witnessed the manifestation of God's powers and attributes in the form of great Signs and miracles. The sinners, on account of their rusted hearts, will remain deprived of the realization of the Divine Being on the Day of Judgment. They will not see the face of God. The *Sūra* particularly deals with the fraudulent behaviour of Christian Western Powers.

The use of the particle كَلَّا (by no means) three times after referring to the wicked deeds of disbelievers seems to suggest that the Christian Western Powers will receive three severe shocks, may be in the form of three world wars, two of which have already taken place.

19. Nay! but the record of the virtuous is surely in 'Illīyyīn.⁴⁶³³

20. And what should make thee know what 'Illīyyūn is?

21. *"It is a Book written comprehensively.*

22. The chosen ones of God will witness it.

23. ^bSurely, the virtuous will be in Bliss,⁴⁶³⁴

24. ^cSeated on couches, gazing.⁴⁶³⁵

25. Thou wilt find in their faces the freshness of Bliss.^d

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْإِبْرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيِّينَ^{١٩}

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ^{٢٠}

كِتَابٌ مَرْقُومٌ^{٢١}

يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ^{٢٢}

إِنَّ الْإِبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ^{٢٣}

عَلَى الْأَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ^{٢٤}

تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ^{٢٥}

^a45 : 30; 69 : 20.

^b45 : 31; 82 : 14.

^c15 : 48 ; 18 : 32 ; 36 : 57 ; 76 : 14.

^d75 : 23 ; 76 : 12.

4633. Important Words :

عليين is considered by some to have been derived from علا which means, it was or became high, and thus may mean, the most exalted ranks which the righteous will enjoy. The word may also mean liberty or freedom which signifies that the righteous will be free to go anywhere in Paradise. The word may also stand for those parts of the Qur'ān which contain prophecies about the great progress and prosperity of believers. According to Ibn 'Abbās the word means Paradise (Ibn Kathīr), while Imām Rāghib considers it to be the name of the dwellers thereof.

Commentary :

The word سجين being singular and عليين

plural it appears that the punishment of evil-doers will be static, i.e. stationary in one place, but the spiritual progress of the righteous will continue without interruption, assuming different forms. They will go from one rank to another.

4634. Commentary:

The verse means that it is an unalterable Divine decree that the righteous will make unending progress.

4635. Commentary :

Sinners will not be able to see the face of God, but the righteous believers will be granted the favour of having a view of the Divine Being.

26. They will be given to drink of a pure beverage, sealed⁴⁶³⁶

يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. The sealing of it will be with musk—for this let the aspirants aspire—

خِتْمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. And it will be tempered with the water of Tasnīm,⁴⁶³⁷

وَمِزَاجُهُ مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

29. A spring of which the chosen ones will drink.⁴⁶³⁸

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. "Those who were guilty used to laugh at those who believed,"⁴⁶³⁹

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

423 : 111.

4636. Important Words :

رحيق (pure beverage) means, the oldest, choicest, sweetest, most excellent of wine; wine easy to swallow; honey; a sort of perfume. مسك means, unadulterated musk (Lane).

4637. Important Words :

تسним (tasnīm) is inf. noun from سَمَّ (sanna) i.e., he raised the thing. سَمَّ الشَّيْءَ means, such a one filled the vessel. تسنیم is taken to be a fountain in Paradise; water coming from above: the knowledge of God. Figuratively, it means, the Word of God.

Commentary :

If رحيق (pure beverage) be taken as referring

to the Qur'ān, تسنیم are revelations that are sent down to the Chosen Ones of God—the righteous followers of the Holy Prophet.

4638. Commentary :

The Chosen Ones of God, from among the Holy Prophet's followers, will be made to drink deep at the fountain of Divine realization that God will cause to flow.

4639. Commentary :

The verse means that disbelievers used to laugh in their sleeves at the frequent prophecies about the rapid spread and triumph of Islam, made at a time when it was fighting a seemingly losing battle for its existence.

31. And when they passed by them, they winked at one another.⁴⁶⁴⁰

32. "And when they returned to their families they returned exulting;⁴⁶⁴¹

33. And when they saw them they said, 'These indeed are the lost ones!'

34. But they were not sent as keepers over them.

35. This day, therefore, it is the believers who will laugh at the disbelievers^{b, 4642}

36. *Seated* on couches, gazing.⁴⁶⁴³

37. Are *not* the disbelievers *duly* requited for what they used to do?

وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَرُونَ^{٣١}

وَإِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ انْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ^{٣٢}

وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ لَضَالُّونَ^{٣٣}

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظِينَ^{٣٤}

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ^{٣٥}

عَلَىٰ الْأَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ^{٣٦}

هَلْ ثَوَابَ الْكُفَّارِ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ^{٣٧}

^a84 : 14.

^{b2} : 213.

4640. Important Words :

يتغامزون (they winked at one another in mockery) is derived from غمز. They say غمزه بالعين *i.e.*, he made a sign to him with the eye. تغامزوا means, they made signs to one another with their eyes, eye-brows, hands, indicating something blameable and faulty (Lane).

4641. Commentary :

The verses (31-33) refer to the jibes, jests, and insults to which the Muslims were subjected at Mecca; in fact, to the mockeries and railleries hurled at believers in the time of every Prophet of God and Divine Reformer.

4642. Commentary :

The verse says that disbelievers will have tables turned on them, and that they will be made to realize, to their shame and chagrin, that it were

they and not the believers who deserved to be laughed at for rejecting the Divine Message. "This day" means the day of the triumph of Truth over untruth.

4643. Important Words :

ينظرون (viewing) نظر means, he looked, contemplated, judged, decided; he paid regard to; he supervised or had superintendence over. نظر بينهم means, he judged between them. نظر في احوال اليتامى means, he examined the property of the orphans to manage it (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Seated on the thrones of dignity the believers will witness the sad fate of arrogant disbelievers. Or, the meaning may be : Seated on the thrones of authority they will administer justice to men, or will pay due regard to the needs of others.

CHAPTER 84

SŪRA AL-INSHIQĀQ

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

Like the preceding three Chapters, the present *Sūra* was revealed early at Mecca. The four *Sūrās* very much resemble in style, composition and subject-matter. Noldeke and Muir agree with Muslim scholars about the early date of the revelation of this *Sūra*—near about the time of revelation of the *Sūrās* that immediately precede it. In fact, the present *Sūra* completes the chain of which the preceding three *Sūrās* also form the component part.

Towards the end of the last *Sūra* disbelievers were warned in emphatic terms that their power would break and their glory depart. In the present *Sūra* it is stated that belief will take the place of disbelief and from the ruins of the old decadent and decrepit order a new, vigorous and vibrant order would emerge. The *Sūra* continues the theme of *Sūra Infiṭār* (Chap. 82), the intervening *Sūra Taṭfīf* (Chap. 83) being merely its extension. *Sūra Infiṭār* had opened with the subject of the cleaving asunder of the heaven; and the present *Sūra* begins with an analogous expression, with this difference that whereas in *Sūra Infiṭār* “cleaving asunder of the heaven” was connected with the false doctrines of Christianity which would excite God’s wrath, in the present *Sūra* by “the bursting asunder of the heaven” is meant the descent of Divine revelation and the emergence and spread of spiritual sciences. Thus the present *Sūra*, with its three predecessors, forms a chain of Chapters which deal with the subject of the regeneration and renaissance of Islam in the Latter Days, and with the sins and iniquities of the previous period. The present *Sūra* specifically deals with the renaissance of Islam while the preceding *Sūrās* deal with corruption and immorality.

سُورَةُ الْإِنْشِقَاقِ مَكِّيَّةٌ ﴿٨٣﴾

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. When the heaven bursts asunder^{b, 4643-A}

3. And gives ear to her Lord^c—and this is incumbent upon her—⁴⁶⁴⁴

4. And when the earth is spread out^{a, 4645}

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ ②

وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ③

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b55 : 38 ; 69 : 17.

^c41 : 12.

^d50 : 45

4643-A. Commentary :

The verse refers to the time when the gates of heaven will open and heavenly Signs in support of Islam will appear in large numbers and highly placed persons will begin to give serious thought to the revealed guidance. For a detailed note on this spiritual phenomenon of the bursting forth or opening out of the heaven see 21 : 31.

4644. Important Words :

أذنت لربها (hearkens to her Lord). They say أذن إليه وله *i.e.*, he listened to him, being pleased with him (Lane). The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: ما أذن الله لشيئ . ما أذن للنبي يتغنى بالقرآن

i.e., God is not so fond of listening to anything as when the Prophet recites the Qur'ān (Bukhārī, chapter *Fāḍl al-Qur'ān*).

حق (this is incumbent upon her). حق means, it was or became necessary or unavoidable; it was or became binding, obligatory, incumbent or due. لك أن تفعل كذا *i.e.*, it is incumbent, obligatory, necessary, etc., for thee that thou shouldst do this (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse taken with its predecessor purports to say that a new Adam will be born and "the angels of the heaven will take their stand on his

side, ready to help him in the furtherance and propagation of his Divine mission (69 : 18), because that is mainly the object of their creation. The verse further implies that a new order will come into being and great heavenly Signs will appear and the Word of God will descend in quick succession, disclosing to the God-fearing heavenly mysteries and spiritual sciences.

4645. Important Words :

مدت (is spread out). مد الله الأرض means, God expanded or stretched out and made level the earth. مد في عمره means, he had his life lengthened. أمد له في الأجل means, he deferred or postponed for him the period of duration. مد القوم means, he aided or succoured the people or became an auxiliary to them. مد الأرض means, he put manure in the land (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse signifies that the earth will get a new lease of life and the destruction which it had deserved on account of men's sins will be deferred; and it will receive fresh manure *i.e.*, new means will be provided for the spiritual progress of its dwellers. The verse may also signify that some planets which appear to pertain to the heaven will be discovered to form a part of the earth and men will try to reach them by means of rockets, etc.

5. And casts out *all* that is in her,
and *appears* to become empty;⁴⁶⁴⁶

6. And gives ear to her Lord—and
this is incumbent upon her—

7. Verily, thou, O man, art toiling
on towards thy Lord, a hard toiling:
then thou wilt meet Him^{a, 4647}

8. Then as for him who is given his
Record in his right hand^{b, 4648}

9. He will surely have an easy
reckoning,

10. And he will return to his family,
rejoicing.

11. But as for him who will have his
Record given to him behind his
back^{c, 4649}

وَالْقَتُّ مَا فِيهَا وَنَخَلَتْ ۝

وَإِذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ۝

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا
فَمُلقِيهِ ۝

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ ۝

فَسَوْفَ يَحْصِبُ حِسَابًا يَّسِيرًا ۝

وَيُنْقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ۝

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ۝

^a2 : 224 ; 11 : 30 ; 18 : 111 ; 29 : 6.

^b17 : 72 ; 56 : 28 ; 69 : 20.

^c56 : 42 ; 69 : 26.

4646. Commentary :

The verse may mean:

- (a) The earth will throw out its hidden treasures so abundantly that it would appear as if it was going to empty itself out.
- (b) Spiritual sciences will make great progress.
- (c) The science of archaeology will specially develop and expand.
- (d) The earth will become cleansed of sin and iniquity on account of great miracles and Signs that it will witness and people will listen to the Divine Message.

4647. Important Words :

كَدَح (toiling hard) is act. part. from كَدَح which means, he laboured hard and actively; he toiled or laboured hard till he wearied himself (Lane & Agrab).

Commentary :

Man has to work hard to attain to God, to suffer physical, mental and monetary sacrifice in order to achieve this goal.

4648. Commentary :

“The right hand” being a metaphor for power and strength, the verse means that those fortunate people who had acted upon the teachings of the Qur’ān with patience and perseverance will be given their record in their right hand, signifying that they had lived up to its commandments to the best of their ability.

4649. Commentary :

Those “who had thrown the Book of God behind their backs, i.e., those who had treated the Qur’ān as a discarded thing” (25 : 31), will be given their record behind their backs. This will constitute a sign that they had not acted upon its teaching.

12. He will soon call for destruction,⁴⁶⁵⁰

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا^{١٧}

13. And he will burn in a blazing Fire.

وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا^{١٨}

14. Verily, *before this* he lived joyfully among his people.^a

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا^{١٩}

15. He indeed thought that he would never return to God^b.⁴⁶⁵¹

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ يَجُورَ^{٢٠}

16. Yea! surely, his Lord was ever watchful of him.

بَلَىٰ إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا^{٢١}

17. But nay! I call to witness the glow of sunset,^{4651-A}

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالْشَّفَقِ^{٢٢}

18. And the night and *all* that it envelops,^{4651B}

وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ^{٢٣}

19. And the moon when it becomes full,⁴⁶⁵²

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ^{٢٤}

^a83 : 32; ^b18 : 36.

4650. Important Words :

ثُبُور (destruction) is derived from ثَبَرَ which means, he perished; he suffered loss; he erred; he became lost. ثُبُور means, loss, perdition; complete destruction, woe, etc. (Lane). See also 25 : 15.

Commentary :

When a man is in extreme distress, he desires death might end his life. The verse under comment describes this state of mind of the disbelievers. Face to face with Divine punishment in the form of blazing fire, the disbelievers will wish death to come upon them and "death will come to them from every direction but they will not die" (14 : 18).

4651. Important Words :

يَجُور (would return) is formed from حَار which means, he returned from a good state to a bad state. They say نَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الْجُورِ بَعْدَ الْكُورِ i.e.,

we seek protection with God that we should return to a bad state after a good state. حَار also means, it decreased or became defective or deficient; he perished or died; he became changed from one state or condition to another; he was or became perplexed and confounded and was unable to see his right course. The Arabs say حَار و بَار i.e., he was reduced to or became in a defective and bad state (Lane & Aqrab).

4651-A. Commentary :

See note on v. 19.

4651-B. Commentary :

See note on v. 19.

4652. Important Words :

اتَّسَق (becomes full) is derived from وَسَقَ . They say وَسَقَ الشَّيْءُ i.e., he gathered and heaped up the thing. اتَّسَقَ الْأَمْرُ means, the affair became in good order, complete, perfect,

20. That you shall assuredly pass on from one stage to another.⁴⁶⁵³

21. So what is the matter with them that they believe not^a,⁴⁶⁵⁴

22. And when the Qur'an is recited unto them, they do not bow in submission;⁴⁶⁵⁵

23. On the contrary, those who disbelieve reject it.^b

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ ۝

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ ۝

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ۝

^a43 : 89. ^b85 : 20.

whole. اتسق القمر means, the moon became full; its light became complete and it became بدر (moon of the 14th night); the moon became full and its light became complete. from the 13th to the 16th night (Lane, Farrā').

Commentary :

In this verse reference is made to the moon of the 14th night which, shining in all its brightness, would dispel the spiritual darkness that had enshrouded the entire face of the earth. This moon was the Promised Messiah who was born in the 13th century of Hijra and who announced his claim in the 14th century the period of his ministry extending to the end of the 16th century A. H. (Taryāq al-Qulūb). Thus these verses (17—19) contained a prophecy about the temporary decline of Muslims, and their renaissance through the Promised Messiah who was to reflect in his person fully and faithfully the glorious light of the sun, i.e., the Holy Prophet.

4653. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the renaissance of Islam will take place through the indefatigable missionary efforts of the Promised Messiah and

his devoted followers, gradually and in stages. Or the verse may mean that Muslims will pass through all the conditions referred to in the preceding verses—periods of light and darkness.

4654. Commentary :

What is the matter with the disbelievers (the verse asks) that after having witnessed the fulfilment of the first two parts of the prophecy, they have despaired of the fulfilment of the third part? They have seen the ruddy glow of the sunset of Islam, followed by the darkness of spiritual night for thirteen hundred years after the Holy Prophet, and yet they do not believe that the moon of the 14th night will appear to dispel darkness.

4655. Commentary :

The allusion in the verse may be to the renaissance of Islam in the Latter Days and the bringing back of faith from the Pleiades by a man of Persian descent—the Promised Messiah, which, as it were, will amount to the Qur'an being revealed again. Instead of being grateful to God for this great boon, the disbelievers will oppose him and reject the Divine Message.

24. And Allah knows best what they keep hidden *in their hearts*.⁴⁶⁵⁶

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

25. "So give them tidings of a painful punishment.

فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

26. ^bBut *as to* those who believe and do good works, theirs is an unending reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ

أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

^a9 : 34. ^b11 : 12 ; 41 : 9 ; 95 : 7.

4656. Important Words :

يُوعُونَ (keep hidden in their hearts) is derived from وعى which means, he gathered and preserved, grasped together and put in a receptacle. أوعى الكلام means, he preserved in his memory, remembered and gathered the talk (Aqrah).

Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers that God knows well the animosity and malice they harbour in their hearts against God's Messenger; He also knows the secret plots they hatch to bring to nought his mission and his efforts to promote the cause of Truth.

CHAPTER 85

SŪRA AL-BURŪJ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

This *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca in the first few years of the Call. It takes its title from the word *Burūj* in the first verse. The connection of this *Sūra* with its predecessor—*Sūra Inshiqāq*—is indicated by the fact that in the latter *Sūra* the moon of the 13th night was invoked as a witness, and in the present *Sūra* “mansions of stars and the Promised Day” have been invoked to serve the same purpose. The *Burūj* or mansions of stars may represent the twelve Divine Reformers (*Mujaddids*), each of whom was raised at the beginning of a century of Hijra, and the Promised Day stands for the 14th century of Hijra when the Muslims stood in great need of a Divine Reformer, their fortunes having sunk to the lowest ebb, and thus, befittingly, the greatest of these Reformers—the Promised Messiah—was raised to restore to them their spiritual glory. This *Sūra* presents the subject-matter of the preceding *Sūra* in a different form and points to the severe persecution to which the followers of the Promised Messiah would be subjected, ending appropriately on the note that because in the time of the Promised Messiah the integrity of the Qur’ān as God’s revealed Word would be assailed from all quarters, particularly by Christian writers, the Promised Messiah would devote all his energies and his great God-given gifts to rebut these attacks and to prove the infallibility and inviolability of the Qur’ān.



1.^a In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By the heaven having mansions of stars^{b, 4657}

3. And by the Promised Day,⁴⁶⁵⁸

4. And by the Witness and by him about Whom witness is borne,⁴⁶⁵⁹

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ
وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b15 : 17; 25 : 61.

4657. Important Words :

البروج (mansions of stars) is the plural of برج (burj) which is substantive noun from برج (baraja) which means, it was or became apparent, manifest or conspicuous or it was or became high or elevated. برج means, a tower; a sign of the Zodiac. بروج means, mansions (i.e., courses or stages) of the moon or the stars; or asterisms or constellations. See also 15 : 17 (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that just as there are twelve mansions of stars in the physical heaven, similarly there will be twelve Divine Reformers or *Mujjadids* or twelve mansions in the spiritual firmament of Islam who will keep its light burning after the sun had set i.e., after the first three best centuries of Islam will have passed resulting in spread of spiritual darkness over the whole world. These Reformers will bear witness to the truth of Islam, of the Qur'an and to that of the Holy Prophet.

4658. Commentary :

"The Promised Day" here signifies the day when the Promised Messiah will be raised to bring about the renaissance of Islam. There have been many such days in the history of Islam which could be called the "Promised Day," namely, the day of the Battle of Badr, the day when the Battle of Ditch came to a glorious end, and

the day of the Fall of Mecca. But the Promised Day "*par excellence*" was the time of the Second Coming of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah in the 14th Century A.H., when Islam was to receive a new life and to prevail over all other religions.

The verse may also signify the day when the righteous will enjoy the ecstasy of meeting with their Lord.

4659. Commentary :

Every Prophet or Divine Reformer is شاهد i.e., bearer of witness, because he is a living witness to the existence of God, and he is also مشهود (about whom witness is borne) because God bears witness to his truth by showing Signs and miracles at his hands, and by creating conditions and circumstances which establish the truth of his Message and mission. But here, as the text shows, the شاهد (bearer of witness) is the Promised Messiah and مشهود (about whom witness is borne) is the Holy Prophet, and the verse signifies that the Promised Messiah will bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet by his speeches, discourses and writings, and by the Signs that God will show at his hands. The Promised Messiah will also bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet in the sense that in his person the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the appearance of the Messiah and Mahdī in the

5. Cursed be the fellows of the trench—⁴⁶⁶⁰

قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ ۝

6. The fire *fed* with fuel—

النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوَقُودِ ۝

7. As they sat by it,⁴⁶⁶¹

إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ ۝

8. And they were witnesses of what they did to the believers.⁴⁶⁶²

وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ ۝

14th century A. H. will be fulfilled. The Promised Messiah will also be *مشهود* in the sense that the *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet will bear witness to his truth. Thus the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah will both be *شاهد* (bearer of witness) and *مشهود* (about whom witness is borne).

It is not intended there to refer to any past incident of doubtful authenticity. Nowhere in the Qur'an has God sworn by past incidents. In v. 3. God swears by the "Promised Day." In the present and the next few verses it is hinted that the followers of the Promised Messiah will have to render great sacrifices to usher in that Great Day.

4660. Commentary :

By some Commentators of the Qur'an the verse is taken to refer to the burning to death of some Christians by the Jewish King, Dhū Nuwās of Yemen ; by some others to the casting into a burning furnace of some Israelite leaders by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Dan. 3 : 19-22). The verse may also apply to those enemies of truth, who in the time of every Divine Reformer bitterly oppose and persecute believers. But as the context shows, the verse applies particularly to the enemies of the Promised Messiah and the persecutors and tormentors of his righteous followers. The word "trench" may possess a prophetic reference to the trenches of modern warfare.

4661. Commentary :

These verses (vv. 5-8) show that all the forces of darkness will combine to oppose and persecute the Promised Messiah and his righteous followers, and that the persecution will be severe and continuous. In fact, in these verses a description is given of those enemies of truth who kindle the fire of persecution against righteous believers in all ages and constantly keep it ablaze. Their end is predicted in v. 11.

4662. Commentary :

The enemies of truth know in their heart of hearts that their opposition is cruel and unjustified and that the victims of their tyranny are innocent.

9. "And they hated them not but *only* because they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy,⁴⁶⁶³

وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ
الْحَمِيدِ ⑨

10. To Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth;^b and Allah is Witness over all things.⁴⁶⁶⁴

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ⑩

11. Those who persecute the believing men and the believing women and then repent not, for them is surely the punishment of Hell, and for them is the punishment of burning.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ
يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ⑪

12. "But those who believe and do good works, for them are Gardens through which streams flow. That is the great triumph.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ⑫

13. Surely, the grip of thy Lord is severe.^d

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ⑬

14. "He it is Who originates and reproduces;⁴⁶⁶⁵

إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ ⑭

^a5 : 60 ; 7 : 127.

^b14 : 3.

^c11 : 24 ; 31 : 9 ; 41 : 9 ; 98 : 8-9. ^d11 : 103 ; 22 : 3.

^e29 : 20 ; 30 : 12.

4663. Commentary :

The verse is full of pathos. The only fault of the believers is that they believe in One, Merciful and Almighty God. Is belief in God really such a heinous crime that its holders should be subjected to cruel persecution? These verses may also refer to the persecution of the early Muslims at Mecca. They had done nothing to excite the enmity of their compatriots except that they had given up worshipping idols of wood and stone and instead had believed in God, the Maker of heavens and earth.

4664. Commentary :

The verse at once holds a message of comfort for the believers and a severe warning to their persecutors. Let the disbelievers, it says, vent their spleen against God's holy men and persecute them to their heart's content. God is Witness to all their inhumanities and barbarities, and the time is fast approaching when they will be punished for their evil deeds and the kingdom of the earth will be given over to the persecuted believers.

4665. Commentary :

The verse means that God will punish the cruel and tyrannical persecutors of believers, in this world and in the life to come.

15. And He is the Most Forgiving,
the Loving;

وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْودُودُ ۝

16. The Lord of the Throne, the
Lord of honour;⁴⁶⁶⁶

ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ۝

17. ^aDoer of whatever He wills.

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ۝

18. ^bHas *not* the story of the hosts
come to thee?

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ۝

19. Of Pharaoh and Thamūd?⁴⁶⁶⁷

فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ ۝

20. ^cNay, but those who disbelieve
persist in rejecting the truth.

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ ۝

21. And Allah encompasses *them*
from before them and from behind
them.

وَاللَّهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ ۝

22. ^dNay, but it is a glorious
Qur'an.⁴⁶⁶⁸

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَجِيدٌ ۝

23. ^eIn a *well* guarded tablet.⁴⁶⁶⁹

فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ ۝

^a 2 : 254 ; 22 : 15. ^b 10 : 91 ; 28 : 40-41 ; 51 : 41.

^c 84 : 23. ^d 50 : 2 ; 56 : 78.

^e 41 : 43 ; 56 : 79.

4666. Commentary :

The word عرش (Throne) signifying regal might, power and sovereignty (Lane), the verse means that God has the power to punish evil-doers and to confer the kingdom of the earth on His righteous servants. He can do what He likes.

4667. Commentary :

The believers are again comforted by this verse and the disbelievers warned. Both of them are told that not only will the followers of the Holy Prophet or, for that matter, the followers of the Promised Messiah, be subjected to persecution, but during the ages the votaries of Satan have harried and harassed men of God and in the long run were themselves destroyed. The cases of Pharaoh's hosts and of the

tribe of Thamūd are cited as instances of Divine retribution. These two peoples of antiquity possessed great power and ruled over vast dominions. For the might, majesty and material resources of Pharaoh and the tribe of Thamūd see 43 : 52-55 and 11 : 62.

4668. Commentary :

The verse challenges disbelievers to do their worst to discredit the Qur'an. The Qur'an, however, will continue to be read and held in high esteem all over the world.

4669. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a challenging prophecy about the Qur'an being guarded against every kind of interference and distortion. See also 15 : 10.

CHAPTER 86

SŪRA AL-TĀRIQ

(Revealed before *Hijra*)

General Remarks

The *Sūra* derives its title from the word *Al-Tāriq* in its opening verse. The consensus of Muslim scholarly opinion assigns the *Sūra* to the early period of the Holy Prophet's ministry. Noldeke and Muir among European scholars agree with this view.

The *Sūra* is the last of the chain of Chapters which began with *Sūra Infiṭār*. In all these *Sūrās* the opening verse, in one form or another, furnishes an argument in support of the claim of the Promised Messiah. The intervening *Sūra Taṭfīf*, which has a different opening, forms, in fact, a part of *Sūra Infiṭār*. The present *Sūra* continues and completes the topics which were dealt with in *Sūra Infiṭār* and in the Chapters that follow it and serves as a sort of *برزخ* between the *Sūrās* that precede and those that follow that *Sūra*. From this *Sūra*, however, begins a new subject.

سُورَةُ الطَّارِقِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٨٦)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By the heaven and the Morning Star—⁴⁶⁷⁰

3. And what should make thee know what the Morning Star is?⁴⁶⁷¹

4. *It is the Star of piercing brightness*—⁴⁶⁷²

5. That there is no soul but has a guardian over it.⁴⁶⁷³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ②

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ③

النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ ④

إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّتَأْعَلِيهَا حَافِظٌ ⑤

“See 1 : 1.

4670. Important Words :

طارق (Morning Star) is derived from طرق. They say طرق الباب *i.e.*, he knocked at the door. طرق أهله ليلًا means, he came to his family by night. The Arabs say, طرقه الزمان بنوائبه *i.e.*, the time visited him with its calamities like one knocking at the door in the night. طارق means, a comer by night, because he has generally to knock; the star that appears in the night; the morning star because it comes in the end of night (Lane, Aqrab & Qadīr). The word also means, a chief or great man, as the expression used by Hind on the day of Uhud shows, *viz.*, بنات طارق نمشي على التمارق *i.e.*, we are the daughters of great men; and we walk upon pillows (Tarikh Al-Kāmil, vol. 2. and “Life of Moḥammad” by Muir).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to the Promised Messiah whose advent like the morning star was to herald the dawn of the triumph and spread of Islam, after the night of spiritual darkness had passed. According to some Commentators, however, the verse refers to the Holy Prophet who appeared when the night of spiritual darkness had spread over

the entire world, it being pitch dark in Arabia, the land where he made his appearance.

4671. Commentary :

The expression ما ادراك ما which occurs in several places in the Qur’ān is used to impart a particular sense to the word or expression used after it. The word طارق having several meanings may therefore be taken in one particular sense here, *viz.*, النجم الثاقب *i.e.*, the star of piercing brightness in the next verse.

4672. Important Words :

الثاقب (of piercing brightness) is act. part. from ثقب which means, he bored or pierced a thing. ثقب الكوكب means, the star shone brightly as though it pierced through the darkness, dispelling it. ثاقب الرأي means, a man of sound and penetrating judgment. حسب ثاقب means, a famous, exalted lineage (Lane & Aqrab).

4673. Commentary :

“Soul” signifying the souls or persons of the class of النجم الثاقب *i.e.*, the bright stars that dispel spiritual darkness, the verse means that God will guard and protect the Promised Messiah, the طارق (the Morning Star) or النجم الثاقب (the Star of Piercing Brightness) of Islam.

6. So let man consider from what he is created.

7. ^aHe is created from a gushing fluid,⁴⁶⁷⁴

8. Which issues forth from between the loins and the breast-bones.^{4674-A}

9. ^bSurely, He has the power to bring him back *to life*

10. ^cOn the day when secrets shall be disclosed.⁴⁶⁷⁵

11. Then he will have no strength and no helper.

12. By the cloud which gives rain repeatedly,⁴⁶⁷⁶

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ^١

خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ^٢

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ^٣

إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ^٤

يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ^٥

فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ^٦

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ^٧

^a24 : 46 ; 25 : 55. ^b17 : 100 ; 36 : 82 ; 46 : 34. ^c10 : 31.

The verse has also been taken to mean that God has appointed a guardian over every person who records his good or bad deeds. For this meaning of the verse see 50 : 19.

4674. Commentary :

The fact that man has been created from a fluid which gushes forth may signify that he has been endowed with great natural faculties to make rapid progress, but he is also likely to sink to the lowest depths of degradation, if he does not make use of those God-gifted powers. Thus the verse means that man's spiritual development is subject to alternate periods of progression and retrogression, like the seminal fluid that gushes forth and falls.

4674-A. Commentary :

It is characteristic of the Quranic style that it substitutes mild or vague words or expressions for harsh and blunt ones. "From between the loins and the breast-bones," is one of such euphemisms used by the Qur'ān. Or the verse may mean that man is born of the water that comes out of the loins of his father and is fed by the breast of his mother.

4675. Commentary :

The verse means that all the evil designs of the enemies of the Promised Messiah will be brought to light and they will suffer the consequences of their evil deeds. It may also mean that man will be called to account on the Day of Reckoning for the actions he had done in this life, when all secrets will become unmasked and all his actions, motives and thoughts will come to light, nothing will remain hidden, so much so that even his hands, feet and, tongue will bear witness against him (24 : 25).

4676. Important Words :

ذات الرج (which gives water repeatedly) is derived from رجع meaning, he returned. رجع (raj'un) means, rain; hail, because it gives back the water that it takes; rain that returns; the place that retains water; a pool of water left by torrent; a place in which the torrent has returned; water in general; benefit; a good turn (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See next verse.

13. And *by* the earth which opens out *with herbage*,⁴⁶⁷⁷

14. Surely, it is a decisive word.⁴⁶⁷⁸

15. Surely, it is not a vain talk.⁴⁶⁷⁹

16. And they plan a plan,^a

17. And I *also* plan a plan.

18. ^bSo give respite to the disbelievers. *Aye*, give them respite for a little while.⁴⁶⁸⁰

وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ﴿١٣﴾

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ ﴿١٤﴾

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ ﴿١٥﴾

إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ﴿١٦﴾

وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا ﴿١٧﴾

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الْكَافِرِينَ أَمُهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْدًا ﴿١٨﴾

^a52 : 43. ^b68 : 45-46 ; 73 : 12.

4677. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse signify that rain on which depends very largely the greenness and vegetation of the earth comes down from heaven in times of need. If it ceases for a time, the water in upper strata of the earth gradually dries up. Thus there exists a connection between heavenly and earthly water. As with the cessation of heavenly water, earthly water begins gradually to dry up, so does human reason lose its purity and strength without heavenly revelation.

4678. Commentary :

See next verse.

4679. Commentary :

In vv. 12-13 the Qur'ān is represented as life-giving rain whereby those who believe in it and

act upon its teaching are purified and fostered in the ways of righteousness. This constitutes a strong proof, not a "joke," that the Qur'ān is God's own revealed Word which distinguishes and discriminates between Truth and falsehood; (هزل meaning, a joke, jest or obscene talk or weak discourse) (Aqrah).

4680. Commentary :

Disbelievers are granted respite that they may try all their evil plans and employ all the strength and resources they possess against Islam and the Holy Prophet. The triumph of Islam, despite all their planning and their boasted strength, will be an irrefutable proof that it is from Allah and has His full support.

CHAPTER 87

AL - A'ĻĀ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title and Date of Revelation

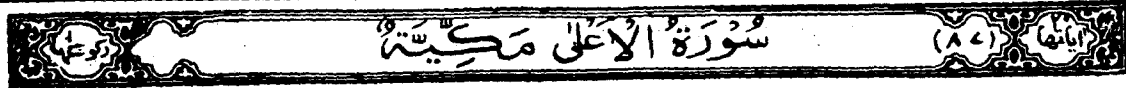
This *Sūra* was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry at Mecca. Besides most Commentators of the Qur'ān, Muir and Noldeke hold this view, the latter (Noldeke) places its revelation after Chapter 78, while some Muslim scholars assign it the eighth place in the chronological order of revelation of the Qur'ān. The *Sūra* takes its title from its opening verse in which glorification of the Most High Lord has been enjoined.

Context and Subject-Matter

In the preceding *Sūra* it was stated that the Promised Reformer would not only be the *Badr* (moon of the 14th night) but also the *Ṭāriq* i.e., Morning Star, which heralds the dawn. Besides, it was stated that the Qur'ān was not only a complete and perfect code of Divine laws for those to whom it was originally addressed but is also capable of meeting the needs and requirements of all mankind for all time, and that at no time will it be subject to change, abrogation or interpolation. This Quranic claim gives rise to the natural and inevitable question, viz., where was the need of a new Reformer in the presence of such a complete and perfect revelation. The *Sūra* seeks to answer this important question. It was further mentioned in *Sūra Al-Ṭāriq* that man is so constituted that his development is subject to periods of rise and fall. This fact again gives rise to another equally important question, viz., that after the revelation of a Law, complete in all respects, man's progress should naturally become uniform and uninterrupted and immune against all possibility of retrogression. This being so, why was a complete *Shari'at* not revealed in the beginning of the world; why was it deferred till the time of the Holy Prophet? The *Sūra* supplies an answer to this question also.

The *Sūra* possesses another intimate connection with its predecessor. In that *Sūra* it was stated that man is born of a fluid which issues forth from the loins of his father and gets his sustenance from the breast of his mother. This constituted a subtle hint of the gradual process of man's physical development. In the *Sūra* under comment we are told that like his physical development man's spiritual development will also be gradual.

The Holy Prophet generally recited this and the next *Sūra* in the Friday and 'Īd Prayers.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Glorify the name of thy Lord,⁴⁶⁸¹ the Most High,

3. "Who creates and perfects,⁴⁶⁸²

4. ^aAnd Who measures and guides,⁴⁶⁸³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ②

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ③

وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b56 : 75 ; 69 : 53.

^c82 : 8 ; 91 : 8.

^d80 : 20.

4681. Important Words :

For سَبِّحْ (glorify) see 61 : 2.

Commentary :

The verse may be interpreted as: (a) glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High; and (b) glorify the most high name of thy Lord.

The words رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى (the Most High Lord) signify that as God has created man for unlimited progress, therefore, He has endowed him with great natural powers and faculties that he may fulfil his high destiny; only his development is to be progressive and in stages. Incidentally, the Divine attribute رَبِّ (The Lord Who makes things grow and develop by stages) disposes of the objection, viz., why the perfect Law was not revealed in the beginning of creation? The word implies that perfect Law could only have been revealed after man's intellect and reason had attained their highest development which happened after a long and gradual process of evolution.

4682. Important Words :

قَدَّرَ means, he measured; determined; decreed; designed (Lane & Aqrab).

سَوَّى (perfected). سَوَاه means, he made it equal, uniform, right; (2) he made it symmetrical;

made it congruous or consistent in its several parts; (3) he made it to be adapted to the requirements of wisdom; (4) he made it complete, or perfected its make; he adjusted it; (5) God made his constitution symmetrical or made him complete and perfect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse shows that a high destiny awaits man and that for the fulfilment of it God has endowed him with the highest natural faculties and capacities. He can attain the highest spiritual stature; can reflect in his person Divine attributes so as to become the mirror of his Creator. This implies that the Creator Himself is perfect and is completely free from all conceivable defects and weaknesses.

4683. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse give four reasons for the glorification of God, viz: (1) God brought us into being. (2) He endowed us with all the faculties and capacities that are needed for our spiritual and intellectual development. (3) He determined man's physical and spiritual needs and (4) for the fulfilment of those needs He revealed guidance that man might attain the object of his creation.

5. And Who brings forth the pasture,

6. Then turns it into black stubble⁴⁶⁸⁴.

7. We shall teach thee *the Qur'an*, and thou shalt forget *it not*,⁴⁶⁸⁵

وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَىٰ ۝

فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاءً أَخْوَىٰ ۝

سُنُقِرُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَىٰ ۝

418 : 46 ; 57 : 21.

4684. Important Words :

غُثَاء (stubble) means, the rubbish or refuse and scum and rotten leaves mixed with the scum borne upon the surface of a torrent; decayed and broken pieces of herbage that are seen upon a torrent; a perishable thing. They say ماله غُثَاءٌ وعمله هباءٌ وسعيه خفاءٌ i.e., his property is as rubbish borne by a torrent and his work is as motes and his labour is unseen. غُثَاءُ النَّاسِ means, the refuse of mankind (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse constitutes a subtle answer to the objection: Why God first revealed incomplete Laws, suited only to the needs of the peoples and the periods in which they were revealed, and then revealed the last and most perfect *Shari'at* in the form of the *Qur'an*, which was meant to guide mankind for all time? It purports to say that God has created two kinds of things: (1) Those that like herbage and pasture satisfy man's temporary needs and thus have a limited tenure of life. The former Scriptures, like these things, fulfilled man's temporary needs and, therefore, were subject to decay and death. (2) Those things such as the sun, the moon, the earth, etc., which are of permanent use for man. They will last with the universe. Like the latter the *Qur'an* is meant to be man's unerring guide till the end of time; hence it is immune to change, replacement and the wasting effect of time.

4685. Commentary :

The verse develops the argument implied in the preceding one. It purports to say that the *Qur'an* being God's last Message for mankind has been granted Divine protection against interference, distortion or interpolation. The promise of protection has been given in emphatic and clear terms, viz; "Verily, We Ourselves have sent down the Reminder, and most surely We will be its Guardian (15 : 10). The last fourteen centuries have witnessed the fulfilment of this mighty prophecy, in that the *Qur'an* has become a part of the thought and life of the Muslims as a whole, so much, that at all times there is found in the world a section of Muslims who proclaim and uphold its true teachings and learn its text by heart. The *Qur'an* that we have with us today is the same, without the change of a word or letter, which was given to the world by the Holy Prophet.

The Holy Prophet was human and as such he was apt to forget and he did forget things as far as the affairs of life were concerned. But God, in His infallible wisdom, had so arranged that despite the fact that the Prophet was not literate and sometimes long *Sūras* were revealed to him in one piece, the revelation remained so indelibly imprinted on his mind that he was never found to forget or falter in reciting the revealed portions. It is marvellous indeed that very long *Sūras* such

8. "Except as Allah wills. Surely, He knows *what is* manifest and what is hidden.⁴⁶⁸⁶

9. ^bAnd We shall provide for thee every facility.⁴⁶⁸⁷

10. So keep on reminding; surely, reminding is profitable.⁴⁶⁸⁸

11. "He who fears will heed;

12. But the most wretched will turn aside from it,⁴⁶⁸⁹

13. He who is to enter the great Fire.^d

إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَى^٨

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَى^٩

فَذَكِّرْ إِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى^{١٠}

سَيَذَكِّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى^{١١}

وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى^{١٢}

الَّذِي يَصِلُ النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى^{١٣}

^a2 : 34 ; 20 : 8 ; 21 : 111 ; 24 : 30.

^b92 : 8.

^c51 : 56.

^d88 : 5.

as Al-Baqarah, Al-'Imrān or Āl-Nisā', were revealed piecemeal, and a period of several years had intervened between the revelation of different parts of each of those *Sūras* and yet the Prophet never for a moment fumbled or faltered in putting the revealed verses in their proper places.

4686. Commentary :

The expression "as God wills", pertains only to matters of ordinary every-day life.

The words, "He knows what is manifest and what is hidden," mean that as God knew all the needs of man of which man himself was unconscious and which he was incapable of knowing, God provided those needs in the Qur'ān, and so there could be no possibility of the Holy Prophet forgetting what was revealed to him.

4687. Commentary :

The verse signifies: (a) that it is easy to commit the Qur'ān to memory; (b) that its teachings possess an adaptability all their own, which makes them conform to, and meet, the exigencies of changing conditions and circumstances and the needs and requirements of men of

different temperaments and dispositions; and (d) that the Quranic injunctions are not arbitrary but wise and rational. These factors combined together make the Qur'ān a Book easy to learn and to act upon. These, among others, are some of the means which God has provided for the eternal protection and preservation of the Quranic text and its meaning.

4688. Commentary :

The verse means that only those people profit by admonition who have fear of God in their hearts. But as it is not given to one to know when admonition would be beneficial to a man, no opportunity should be lost to preach truth and righteousness.

4689. Commentary :

The verse signifies that for those people who, on account of their persistent defiance and rejection of Truth and blind opposition to God's Messengers, incur punishment, a Divine decree comes into operation that they will not benefit by admonition.

14. "Then he will neither die therein nor live."⁴⁶⁹⁰

15. ^bVerily, he *truly* prospers who purifies himself,

16. And remembers the name of his Lord and offers Prayers.

17. ^eBut you prefer the life of this world,

18. ^dWhereas the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

19. 'This indeed is *what is taught* in the former Scriptures—

20. The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.⁴⁶⁹¹

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى^ط^(١٧)

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى^ط^(١٨)

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى^ط^(١٩)

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا^ط^(٢٠)

وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى^ط^(٢١)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى^ط^(٢٢)

صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى^ط^(٢٣)

^a14 : 18 ; 20 : 75.

^b91 : 10.

^c75 : 21.

^d93 : 5.

^e20 : 134.

4690. Commentary :

The unfortunate disbelievers will burn in grievous torment of an abiding character and death will not be allowed to end it; on the other hand, "death will come to him from every quarter but he will not die (14 : 18)." See also 20 : 75.

4691. Commentary :

Because the essential principles of all

religions are basically identical, the teachings mentioned in the foregoing verses are also found in the Scriptures of Moses and Abraham. The verse may also signify that the prophecy about the appearance of a great Prophet who was to give to the world the last Divine Message and the most perfect Teaching is found in the Scriptures of Moses (Deut. 18 : 18-19 & 33 : 2) and Abraham.

CHAPTER 88

SŪRA AL-GHĀSHIYAH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation

The *Sūra*, like its predecessor, was revealed early at Mecca. Eminent early Muslim scholars such as Ibn 'Abbās and Ibn Zubair regard it as of Meccan origin. The famous German Orientalist Noldeke places it in the fourth year of the Call.

Context and Subject-Matter

This and the preceding *Sūrās* deal with the collective life of the Muslim Community in the time of the Holy Prophet and also in the Latter Days, when the Promised Messiah was to appear. This is why the Holy Prophet generally used to recite these two Chapters in the Friday and 'Īd Prayers. In previous *Sūrās* it was stated that the progress of Islam will never be due to material means but will come about through Divine Reformers. When Muslims will decline and decay and the Qur'ān will, as it were, go up to heaven, God will raise the Promised Messiah who will bring it back to earth and will make its ideals and principles shine in resplendent glory. It was also stated that Islam will continue to have, in every age, sincere and devoted followers who will preach and propagate the teaching of the Qur'ān, and that other unpredictable circumstances will also arise that will contribute to the progress and prosperity of Islam. In the present *Sūra*, we are told that Muslims will have to face severe opposition and cruel persecution, and that after they will have patiently stood the test, success will come to them. Though the *Sūra* deals primarily with the vicissitudes through which Muslims have to pass in this life, it also refers, as its name shows, to the Day of Resurrection. On the Day of Reckoning whether in this or in the next life, when the scales are set up, some faces will be downcast, covered with disgrace and ignominy and some others will beam with joy, being pleased with the results of their labour. Incidentally, the *Sūra* contains a subtle hint that sometimes the followers of Islam will have to take up arms, and its success will then be due to the swords and spears of its warriors.

سُورَةُ الْغَاشِيَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. Has there come to thee the news of the Overwhelming Calamity?^b 4692
3. Some faces on that day will be downcast^c; 4693
4. Toiling, weary.^d 4694
5. They shall enter a blazing Fire;^d
6. And will be made to drink from a boiling spring;^e
7. They will have no food save that of dry, bitter and thorny herbage,^e 4695

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①
 هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ②
 وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ ③
 عَامِلَةٌ تَأْسِبَةٌ ④
 تَصْلِي نَارًا حَامِيَةً ⑤
 تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ أُنِيَّةٍ ⑥
 لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيعٍ ⑦

^aSee 1 : 1.^b12 : 108.^c68 : 44; 75 : 25; 80 : 41-42.^d87 : 13 ; 101 : 12.^e47 : 16 ; 55 : 45.

4692. Important Words :

الغاشية (Overwhelming Calamity) is derived from غشى . They say غشيه i.e, it covered or overwhelmed him. غشى الليل means, the night was dark. غاشية means, an overwhelming calamity; a terrific misery (Lane).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse may be to the Judgment Day or to a terrific calamity that overtakes a people in this life, on account of their misdeeds. The severe famine that held Mecca in its grip for about seven years in the time of the Holy Prophet has also been referred to in the Qur'ān as غاشية (44 : 11-12). It was indeed a terrific calamity for the Meccans.

4693. Commentary :

وجوه meaning 'chiefs' or 'leaders of men; the

verse signifies that on the Day of Reckoning the great leaders of disbelief will be debased and humiliation will be writ large on their faces.

4694. Commentary :

The verse means to say that all the endeavours of the leaders of disbelief against Islam will be wasted as they will fail to arrest or retard its progress.

4695. Important Words :

ضرع (dry, bitter and thorny herbage) is derived from ضرع i. e., he (kid) took with his mouth the udder. This seems to be regarded by some as the primary signification of the word. All the three forms viz., *qara'a* & *qari'a* & *qaro'a* mean, he was or became weak. ضريع means, a bad sort of pasture by which cattle do not become fat or fresh and which renders their condition bad; a certain dry, bitter, thorny plant (Lane).

8. Which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger.⁴⁶⁹⁶

9. *And some faces on that day will be joyful,*^a

10. Well pleased with their *past* striving,⁴⁶⁹⁷

11. In a lofty Garden,^b

12. Wherein thou wilt hear no vain talk;^c

13. ^dTherein is a running spring,⁴⁶⁹⁸

14. Therein are raised couches,

15. ^eAnd goblets properly placed,

16. And cushions *beautifully* ranged in rows,

لَا يُسْنُّ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ^٥

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ^٩

لِسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ^{١٠}

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ^{١١}

لَا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَاغِيَةً^{١٢}

فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ^{١٣}

فِيهَا سُرُورٌ مَرْفُوعَةٌ^{١٤}

وَأكْوَابٌ مَوْضُوعَةٌ^{١٥}

وَنَارِقٌ مَصْفُوفَةٌ^{١٦}

^a75 : 23.

^b69 : 23.

^c56 : 26 ; 78 : 36.

^d56 : 32.

^e43 : 72.

4696. Commentary :

Vv. 3—8 signify that the enemies of Islam will try hard to check its progress. But all their efforts will prove abortive. Before their very eyes its tender plant will grow into a mighty tree and their own power and glory will depart. Their sons and grandsons will enter the fold of Islam, and they will be consumed with rage and will burn in the fire of envy at seeing it spread fast; utter humiliation and ignominy will be their lot; they will be given hot water to drink and ^{ضرب} to eat which, instead of giving them nourishment or slaking

their thirst and satisfying their hunger, will add to their weakness and hasten the withering away of their bodies—they will be utterly deprived of peace of mind, and calamities will overwhelm them in varying forms.

4697. Commentary :

The righteous believers will be well pleased with the marvellous results of the sacrifices they had made for the cause of Islam.

4698. Commentary :

Like a running spring their beneficence and goodness will flow unceasingly.

17. And carpets *tastefully* spread.⁴⁶⁹⁹

وَزَرَابِي مَبْثُوثَةٌ ١٤

18. Do they not then look at the camels, how they are created?⁴⁷⁰⁰

وَأَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ١٥

19. ^aAnd at the heaven, how it is raised high?⁴⁷⁰¹

وَالِى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ١٦

20. ^bAnd at the mountains, how they are set up?⁴⁷⁰²

وَالِى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ١٧

21. ^cAnd at the earth, how it is spread out?⁴⁷⁰³

وَالِى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ١٨

^a13 : 3 ; 55 : 8.

^b50 : 8.

^c50 : 8 ; 79 : 31.

4699. Commentary :

The *Sūra* contains a contrast between the heavenly rewards that the righteous will receive and the severe punishment which will be meted out to the sinful for rejecting the Divine Message. The construction of this and the preceding eight verses shows that Muslims collectively will share in the gifts and rewards mentioned in them.

4700. Important Words :

الابل (camels) used as plural means, camels; a herd of camels; clouds (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse means that believers, like camels, going straight in a line all behind the one that leads them, give unquestioning obedience to their Leader. Or like camels which can go on for days without water in the hot sandy desert of Arabia, the believers have infinite patience under trials and go on their spiritual journey without complaining.

ابل as meaning clouds, the verse would signify that God will spread the teachings of the Qur'an which is spiritual water over the whole of the earth.

4701. Commentary :

And just as the heaven has been raised high, so will the Holy Prophet, the spiritual heaven, be exalted. Or the verse may mean that just as God has placed the sun, the moon, the stars and planets in the physical heaven and through them He sustains the physical world, so will the spiritual sun (the Holy Prophet), the spiritual moon (the Promised Messiah), the spiritual planets and stars (Muslim divines) sustain the spiritual world.

4702. Commentary :

The verse may signify that like mountains the believers are firm in their faith, Or like mountains which secure the earth against earthquakes and violent commotions and render it stable, the righteous servants of God are the cause of the stability of the spiritual world. But for them the violent earthquakes of disbelief and sin should shake the spiritual earth to its foundations and cause great havoc in it.

4703. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the earth has been spread out for the Companions of the Holy Prophet that they might carry the Message of

22. Admonish, therefore, for thou art but an admonisher;

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. "Thou art not appointed a warder over them."⁴⁷⁰⁴

لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. But whoever turns away and disbelieves,

إِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25. Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment.

فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. Unto Us surely is their return,⁴⁷⁰⁵

إِنَّا إِلَيْنَا يَا بَهُمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. Then, surely, it is for Us to call them to account.

ثُمَّ إِنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ حَسَابٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

^a6 : 108 ; 39 : 42 ; 42 : 7.

Islam far and wide. The four verses (vv. 18-21) teach a Muslim the supreme moral lesson that he should be generous like the clouds, exalted like the heaven, of fixed resolve like the mountains, and soft and humble like the earth.

hints that a time would come when the Holy Prophet would be given power and authority, and he is enjoined in advance that when he should have power he should not use it for imposing his opinions on others.

4704. Commentary :

The verse constitutes a wonderful commentary on the Divine origin of the Qur'ān. The *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call when only a handful of weak and poor persons had accepted Islam and yet the verse

4705. Commentary :

These last two verses show that the subject which had commenced in *Sūra* 'Al-'Alā has come to an end here and disbelievers are told that they shall return to God to render account of their deeds and actions.

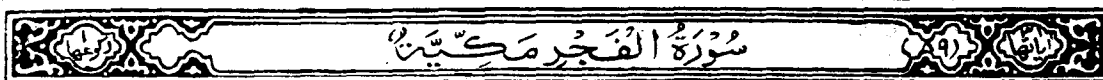
CHAPTER 89

SŪRA AL-FAJR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction

This *Sūra* was among the earliest revealed at Mecca. From historical data and the contents of the *Sūra* itself, it appears to have been revealed some time in the fourth year of the Call. Noldeke places it immediately after *Sūra Al-Ghāshiah*, which, according to Muslim scholars was also revealed in the fourth year, when opposition of the Quraish to the new Faith had not yet become determined, persistent and organized. The *Sūra* takes its title from the first word of the opening verse, viz., *Al-Fajr*. It contains a double prophecy which applies both to the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah. In a beautiful allegory the *Sūra* alludes to the ten years of hardship at Mecca and the Prophet's Emigration to Medina, accompanied by his very faithful Companion, Abū Bakr, and to the first year of his life at Medina which was also full of anxieties. The *Sūra* may also be read as applying to the decline of Islam during the ten centuries after the first three hundred years of uniform success, and to the appearance of the Promised Messiah, as well as to the first century of trials and hardships for his mission and followers. After this brief allegorical description of the vicissitudes and fluctuations of the fortunes of Islam in the time of the Holy Prophet and that of the Promised Messiah, the *Sūra* mentions the case of Pharaoh as representing the opposition which the cause of Truth always encounters from the votaries of falsehood. Opposition to Truth (the *Sūra* further states) springs from accumulation of power and wealth in the hands of a particular class, and misuse of riches and authority by the people of that class brings about their decline and destruction. The *Sūra* concludes that it is only a few fortunate people who accept the Divine Message and by walking in the ways of righteousness succeed in winning God's pleasure, and consequently enjoy complete immunity from fear of failure or faltering, and who, after joining the company of His Elect, enter His Heaven.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Dawn,⁴⁷⁰⁶

وَالْفَجْرِ ②

3. And the Ten Nights,⁴⁷⁰⁷

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ③

4. And the Even and the Odd,⁴⁷⁰⁸

وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

4706. Commentary :

"The Dawn" may mean the Holy Prophet's Emigration to Medina with which ended the ten dark nights or ten years of persecution of the Holy Prophet and his righteous and noble Companions at Mecca. "The Dawn" may also signify the advent of the Promised Messiah who brought a message of hope and of a bright future for Islam after ten dark centuries of its decline and decadence.

See also Introduction to the *Sūra*.

4707. Commentary :

The word ليل meaning, a night, may signify one year after the Hijra in the case of the Holy Prophet and one century in the case of the Promised Messiah. Thus "the Ten Nights" represent the ten dark years of severe persecution to which Muslims were subjected at Mecca before the Holy Prophet's Emigration to Medina which has been likened to the break of the dawn in the preceding verse. Or "the Ten Nights" may refer to the ten centuries of the decline and decadence of Islam before the advent of the Promised Messiah, with which

ended a dark period of degradation, and which ushered in the dawn of a glorious future for Islam. An implied reference to these "Ten Nights" of the decline of Islam is also to be found in the Quranic verse : "He will plan the Divine Ordinance from the heavens unto the earth, then shall it go up to Him in a day the duration of which is thousand years according to what you reckon" (32 : 6). These ten centuries (or a thousand years) of the moral decadence of Muslims came after the first three centuries of the heyday of their glory and grandeur which have been called the best three centuries of Islam by the Holy Prophet (Bukhārī, (*kitāb al-Riqāq*). The decline of Islam began towards the end of the third century A.H., when on the one hand an Umayyad Caliph of Spain signed a pact of mutual assistance with the Pope against the Abbaside Empire of Baghdad and, on the other, the Caliph of Baghdad entered into a treaty of friendship with the Caesar of Rome against the Umayyad Caliph of Spain.

4708. Commentary :

Continuing the allegory the word الشفع (the Even) may allude to the Holy Prophet and Abu Bakr—his ever faithful Companion. The

5. And the Night when it moves
on to its close,⁴⁷⁰⁹

6. Is there *not* in it strong evidence
for one of understanding? ⁴⁷¹⁰

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسِيرٌ

هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ

two of them made the number even, and God Who was with them in the hour of tribulation was *الوتر* (the Odd) To this "Even and Odd" number a pointed reference is to be found in the words "*One of the two when they were both in the cave, when he said to his Companion, 'Grieve not, for Allah is with us' (9 : 40). Or the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah may be taken as making an even number and Allah an odd, because, while the Prophet in his first advent took refuge along with Abu Bakr in the mount Thaur, Allah being with them, in his second advent, according to a revelation of the Promised Messiah, the Holy Prophet "took refuge in the fortress of India" (Tadhkirah), along with the Promised Messiah, Allah being the third of them. Or "the Even and the Odd" may signify that though the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah were two separate individuals, the Promised Messiah was so completely lost in the Holy Prophet as to become one person with him.*

4709. Commentary :

"The Night" may represent the first year of the Hijra which did not see any abatement of the Holy Prophet's anxieties and in which the Quraish of Mecca marched to the battlefield of Badr with a powerful army to give Islam a *coup de grace* from which it should never recover. It was in the Battle of Badr, about one year after the Hijra, that the Quraish suffered an ignominious defeat and this literally fulfilled Prophet Isaiah's prophecy: "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of an hireling, all the glory

of Kedar shall fail." Thus though after the Emigration to Medina the Morning had dawned for the Muslims, still they were not completely out of the wood; they had to suffer hardships for another night i.e. a year. Or the verse may signify that after the advent of the Promised Messiah which heralded the break of the Dawn for Islam, its difficulties would not altogether disappear. One night of darkness—one century of difficulties—seems to lie ahead; after which Islam would march forward on a uniform course of success. Thus the *Sūra* embodies a double prophecy which was made at a time when the prospects for Islam appeared to be very bleak indeed. It was remarkably fulfilled first, in the first phase of the chequered career of Islam, and it is at present in the process of being fulfilled in the shape of the renaissance being wrought at the hands of the Promised Messiah, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

4710. Important Words :

حجر (understanding) is inf. noun from *حجر* which means, he prevented, he hindered, debarred, withheld. They say *فلان في حجر فلان* i.e., such a one is in the protection of such a one. *حجر* means, the anterior pudendum of a man and of a woman; relationship; understanding, intelligence or reason. *حجر ذو حجر* means, a person who possesses understanding (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The prophecy contained in the above verses constitutes an invincible argument in support of the Divine origin of the Qur'an.

7. Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with 'Ād—⁴⁷¹¹

8. *The tribe of Iram*, possessors of lofty buildings,⁴⁷¹²

9. The like of whom have not been created in *these* parts—⁴⁷¹³

10. "And *with* Thamūd who hewed out rocks in the valley,⁴⁷¹⁴

11. And *with* Pharaoh, lord of vast camps? ^{4714-A}

12. ^bWho transgressed in the cities,

13. ^eAnd wrought much corruption therein.

14. Thy Lord then let fall on them the scourge of punishment.⁴⁷¹⁵

الْمُرْتَكِفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ۖ

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ ۖ

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۖ

وَتَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ ۖ

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ ۖ

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۖ

فَاكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ ۖ

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمُ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ۖ

^a7 : 75 ; 26 : 150.

^b28 : 5.

^c28 : 5.

4711. Commentary :

The Ād were a powerful and prosperous people of antiquity. They defied their Prophet Hūd and were destroyed. For a detailed note on 'Ād and Thamūd see 11 : 62.

4712. Important Words :

العماد (lofty buildings) is the plural of عمود and عمادة which are both derived from عمد. They say عمدته *i.e.*, he supported it. اعتمدت عليه means, I relied upon him in such a case. عماد means, lofty buildings. ذات العماد means, possessing lofty buildings supported by columns or possessing tallness; possessor of tents. فلان رفيع العماد means, such a one is a person of exalted nobility. هو عماد القوم means, he is the support of his people (Lane & Aqrab).

4713. Commentary :

The verse signifies that 'Ād were a very

powerful people in their time. They excelled their contemporary nations in material means and resources.

4714. Commentary :

See 7 : 75 & 11 : 62.

4714-A. Commentary :

See 38 : 13.

4715. Important Words :

سوط (whip) is derived from ساط. They say ساطه *i.e.*, he mixed it, one part with another, and stirred it about and beat it; he whipped him. فلان يسوط الحرب means, such a one manages or conducts the war in person. سوط means, a whip; scourge; a portion or share; vehemence or severity; a mixture; a place where water collects and stagnates (Lane & Aqrab).

15. Surely, thy Lord is *ever* on the watch.

16. As for man, when his Lord tries him and honours him and bestows favours on him, he says, 'My Lord has honoured me'.

17. But when He tries him and straitens for him his *means of* subsistence,^b he says 'My Lord has disgraced me.'⁴⁷¹⁶

18. 'Nay, but you honour not the orphan,

19. ^aAnd you urge not one another to feed the poor.

20. And you devour the heritage of *other people* wholly,⁴⁷¹⁷

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ ۝

فَإِمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَ

نَعَّمَهُ ۖ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ ۝

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ ۖ فَيَقُولُ

رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ ۝

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تَكْرُمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ۝

وَلَا تَحْضُونَ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ۝

وَتَأْكُلُونَ التُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا ۝

^a17 : 84.

^b17 : 84.

^c107 : 3.

^d69 : 35 ; 90 : 17 ; 107 : 4.

4716. Commentary :

Favours are bestowed upon man, sometimes to test his mettle, at other times, to reward him for his good actions. Similarly, he is involved in troubles that he may be tried, rewarded or punished according to his actions. But man is so constituted that when he is in ease and affluence, he regards it as the fruit of his labour and superior intelligence (28 : 79); but when misfortunes overtake him, he attributes them to God. The Qur'ān has treated the question, whether God, or man himself, is the author of his destiny, from different angles. Whereas in 41 : 47 it says that man himself makes or mars his destiny, in 4 : 80 it says that good comes from God but evil from man's ownself, and yet in 4 : 79 it observes that both good and evil come from God. In fact, as God has created everything for the good of man, and it is by misusing

God-given gifts that he involves himself in trouble, good is said to proceed from God and evil from man. But as God produces the results of the good or bad actions of man, good or evil are both said to come from God. And as man is a free agent, both good and evil are attributed to him. Thus these verses explain and support one another, there being no contradiction between them.

4717. Important Words :

لَمَّا (wholly). لَمَّ الشَّيْءُ means, he gathered, amassed, concentrated the thing. They say لَمَّ اللَّهُ شَعَثَ فُلَانٍ i.e., God rectified or repaired and consolidated what was disorganised of the affairs of such a one. لَمَّا means, the whole; altogether; one's own part and that of another (Aqrab).

Commentary :

See next verse.

21. ^aAnd you love wealth with exceeding love.⁴⁷¹⁸

وَيُحِبُّونَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ۝

22. Hearken when the earth is completely broken into pieces;⁴⁷¹⁹

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ۝

23. ^bAnd thy Lord comes, *attended* by the angels, rank upon rank;⁴⁷²⁰

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ۝

^a104 : 3. ^b2 : 110 ; 6 : 159 ; 16 : 34.

4718. Important Words :

جَمَّا (exceeding). جم الماء means, the water became much or abundant. جموا means, they became many. جاؤا جمًّا كثيرا means, they came all of them, none of them remaining behind. مال جم means, much property. جم means, plenty, abundance; exceeding; numerous (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Taken along with the preceding three verses, the verse under comment drives home to hoarders of wealth the evils of hoarding and says to them in effect: "You have been given wealth in abundance not as of right or as the result of superior intellect; you should not, therefore, feel injured or humiliated when you are deprived of it. It is given to you that you should spend it to meet the needs of the orphans and the poor, but you squander it in immoral pursuits, depriving others of their rights in it, or else you hoard it and refuse to spend it in noble causes." In fact, inordinate love of money leads to three inevitable results : (a) It creates in man an excessive desire to keep on adding to his wealth, without spending it on good causes or on

meeting the needs of the orphans and the poor.

(b) It makes him careless about whether he acquires wealth by fair or by dishonest means.

(c) In time of national peril, fear of possible success of the enemy renders his loyalty to his country doubtful. With the desire, in such an eventuality, to keep his life and property safe he does not take an active part in his country's defence. These are the main causes that lead to the destruction of a people. Islam takes as much care of the moral health of society as it takes of that of the individual; and society's health requires that material goods be widely distributed and wealth kept in easy circulation.

4719. Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers that as they do not possess the ingredients mentioned in the foregoing verses which are so essential for the maintenance of the moral health of a people, the time would surely come when they will become morally corrupt and will be seized with Divine punishment.

4720. Commentary :

"The coming of the Lord attended by the angels" is the Quranic idiom for imminent and destructive Divine punishment.

24. And Hell is brought near that day;^a on that day man will remember,^b but of what avail shall that remembrance be to him?

25. He will say, 'O would that I had sent on *some good works* for my life *here!*'

26. So on that day none can punish like unto His punishment.

27. And none can bind like unto His binding,⁴⁷²¹

28. And thou, O soul at peace!⁴⁷²²

29. Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee.

30. So enter thou among My chosen servants,

31. And enter thou My Garden.

وَجَاءَ يَوْمٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ
الْإِنْسَانُ وَآلَى لَهُ الذِّكْرُ^{٢٦}

يَقُولُ لِيَلَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي^{٢٧}

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُ أَحَدٌ^{٢٨}

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُ أَحَدٌ^{٢٩}

يَأْتِيهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ^{٣٠}

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً^{٣١}

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي^{٣٢}

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي^{٣٣}

^a26 : 92.

^b79 : 36.

4721. Commentary :

The Mill of God grinds slowly but it grinds exceeding small. God is slow to punish but when His punishment overtakes a people, it is most destructive. "It spares not and it leaves naught" (74 : 29).

4722. Commentary :

The last four verses of the *Sūra* constitute a befitting climax. They purport to say that he who acquires the pre-requisites for full moral development, mentioned in the foregoing verses, becomes immune to all possibility of faltering or falling. He attains the highest stage of spiritual development; "he is well pleased with his Lord and his Lord is well pleased with him." At

this stage, called the heavenly stage, man is freed from all weakness and frailty and is braced with a peculiar spiritual strength. He becomes "united" with God and cannot exist without Him. As water flows with great force down a slope and, on account of its great mass and the total absence of all obstacles, dashes down with irresistible force, so the God-intoxicated man, at this stage, casting off all trammels, becomes attracted unrestrainedly towards his Maker. It is in this life and not after death that this great transformation takes place in him and it is in this world and not elsewhere that access to Paradise is granted to him. He finds his support only in God; He drinks deep at this fountain of spiritual life and is delivered from death.

CHAPTER 90

AL-BALAD

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This *Sūra* is one of the earliest revealed at Mecca. According to some Christian writers, Mr. Wherry among them, it was revealed in the first year of the Call. If not as early as that it was certainly revealed towards the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth year, inasmuch as it has a close connection with a number of some preceding *Sūras*. It takes its title from the opening verse.

In *Sūra Al-Fajr* it was stated that jibes, mockery and taunts to which the Holy Prophet had been subjected in the first three years of his mission, were about to give place to determined, persistent and organized opposition and persecution and that this persecution would continue for ten long years which allegorically were mentioned as "Ten Nights." In the *Sūra* under comment the Holy Prophet is told that it is in Mecca, his beloved native town, and by his own kith and kin, that he and his followers will be persecuted. It is further mentioned that centuries ago, in pursuance of Divine Command, the Patriarch Abraham and his righteous son, Ishmael, had laid the foundations of this sacred town and had prayed to God that it should become the centre from where should emanate the light which should illumine the world for all time to come. Both the father and the son made great sacrifices in carrying out the commands of God. Abraham's prayer was heard and the Holy Prophet appeared in the fulness of time, and gave to the world the perfect Teaching which enabled man to achieve the noble object of his creation and to lead a happy and prosperous life. But man chose the easy path and refused to attempt "the ascent" that led to the achievement of his great goal. The *Sūra* ends on the note that only those who place before them high ideals and then live up to them achieve their goal, while those who have no noble ideals and make no sacrifice are condemned to a life of failure and frustration.

سُورَةُ الْبَلَدِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. ^bNay, I call to witness this City—⁴⁷²³

3. And thou art a dweller in this City—⁴⁷²⁴

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ②

وَأَنْتَ حِلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ③

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b52 : 5 ; 95 : 4.

4723. Commentary :

According to some authorities, the particle لا has been used here to draw pointed attention to the subject which is about to be introduced. According to them the meaning of the verse is: "Listen! Listen! I call to witness this city." Some other scholars think that the verse signifies that the subject which is going to be introduced is so clear and obvious that it needs no swearing to support it. Yet according to another school the particle is intended to refute an understood objection and the meaning of the verse is: "Not that thou art a forger, as the disbelievers think. Thou art not a forger but a true Prophet of God and this City is called to bear witness to this fact." But more appropriately the verse would mean something like this: "You harbour evil designs about Islam, O, disbelievers ! I know what is in your minds, but I tell you that it would never happen as you desire, and I cite this City as a witness to this fact."

4724. Important Words :

حل (dweller) is derived from حل which means, he was or became free from an obligation or responsibility; it was or became lawful. They say حل عليهم العذاب i.e., the

punishment alighted upon them or the punishment was necessitated by the requirements of justice to take effect upon them. حل بالمكان means, he alighted or dwelt in the house. حل حتى عليه means, the discharge of my right became obligatory on him. حل (hillun) means : (1) the place outside the sacred precincts of Mecca; (2) the thing the doing of which is lawful; (3) target; (4) free from obligation; (5) alighting or dwelling in a place (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

According to the different meanings of the word حل given under Important Words the verse would signify : (1) It is considered lawful to do you any harm, even to kill you, in this City of Mecca which is so sacred that the doing of harm to a living creature in its precincts, not to say of killing it, is strictly forbidden. (2) Thou alone art the target of every conceivable abuse, harm, injury, cruelty or violence against life, property or honour in this sacred City. (3) Thou wilt alight as a conqueror in this City from where thou art being driven out as a fugitive. (4) Thou wilt be freed from obligation to observe the sacredness of this City when thou wilt enter it as a victor and wilt punish those wicked persons who had

4. And the begetter and whom he begot,⁴⁷²⁵

5. "We have surely created man to toil and struggle."⁴⁷²⁶

وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ^ط

^a84 : 7.

placed themselves outside the pale of law by perpetrating unutterable cruelties on innocent Muslims.

What a mighty prophecy ! It was made at a time when opposition to the Holy Prophet was still confined to mocking and jeering at him. The *Sūra*, as stated in the Introduction, was revealed towards the end of the third year of the Call when Islam had not yet begun to be preached openly nor had the Meccans awakened to a realization of the danger which the new Faith subsequently proved to be and, therefore, considered it beneath their dignity to offer it any opposition.

4725. Commentary :

While raising the foundations of the Ka'ba the Patriarch Abraham and his son Ishmael had prayed : "And our Lord, raise among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them" (2 : 130). The expression "the father and the son" refers to Abraham and Ishmael, and the verse purports to say that God had His own plan to accomplish by getting the structure of the Ka'ba raised up by Abraham and Ishmael. This plan was to send the greatest of His Messengers and to give him the final and most perfect Law in the form of the Qur'an for the eternal guidance of mankind. That Divine plan has been fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet. Thus "the father and the

son" stand as a witness to the truth of his Divine claim. Or "the father and the son," may refer to the Holy Prophet and his noble followers, and the verse may signify that the Holy Prophet himself and his followers constitute a proof of the Divine origin of his mission. Their spotless character, their good qualities of head and heart, the great sacrifices they are making in the cause of Truth—all leave no room for doubt that they will succeed in their mission and that those who stand in their way will fail.

4726. Important Words :

كَبَدَ (toil). كَبَدَهُ means. he smote his liver or stomach. كَبَدَ means, difficulty; distress; affliction; the middle of the sky. كَبَدٌ means, in a state in which he has to work hard. It also means, in a right and just state; in just proportion; in an erect state (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the prophecy made in the foregoing verses, viz., that the Holy Prophet will be expelled from Mecca but will come back to it as a conqueror and that Mecca will submit to him, and its inhabitants will enter his fold, will be fulfilled only after he and his followers had gone through great hardships, that is to say, great toil and incessant struggle will be demanded of them to achieve their great goal.

6. "Does he think that no one has power over him?"⁴⁷²⁷

7. He says, 'I have spent enormous wealth.'⁴⁷²⁸

8. Does he think that no one sees him?⁴⁷²⁹

9. Have We not given him two eyes,

10. And a tongue and two lips?

11. ^bAnd We have pointed out to him the two highways of good and evil.⁴⁷³⁰

أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَنْ يَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ ۖ

يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَا لَا بَدَأُ ۖ

أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ ۖ

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ ۚ

وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ۚ

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ۚ

a96 : 15.

b76 : 4.

4727. Commentary :

The verse warns disbelievers that if they think that they can suppress Islam and by means of their wealth and influence can arrest its progress, they labour under a serious misconception. God is aware of their evil designs and He has the power and will bring them to nought.

4728. Important Words :

لَبَد (enormous) means, much wealth; wealth so abundant that there is no fear of its being exhausted; wealth collected in heaps (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Let the opponents of Islam use all their means (the verse purports to say) and spend heaps of wealth to stop spread of Islam, they will not succeed in their evil designs and Islam will continue to make both spiritual and political conquests.

4729. Commentary :

The verse means that God sees deep into

the hearts of opponents of the Holy Prophet. All their endeavours and designs to bring about the failure of his Movement will prove abortive.

4730. Important Words :

النجدَيْن (two highways). نَجْد is inf. noun from نَجَد (najada). نَجَدَهُ means, he helped him. أُنَجِدُ الْبَنَاء means, the building rose high. نَجْد (najdun) means, high and elevated land; an elevated or conspicuous road; a road in a mountain; a plain or evident affair; a skilful guide (Lane & Aqrab). النجدَيْن signifies, the two high or conspicuous ways of good and evil, of truth and falsehood, of spiritual and material progress (Aqrab).

Commentary :

God has provided man with all those means by which he can find out the right path, can sift right from wrong and truth from falsehood. He has been endowed with both spiritual and physical eyes that he may distinguish good from evil. He has been given a tongue and two lips that he might ask for guidance, and above all God has placed

12. But he attempted not the steep ascent.⁴⁷³¹

فَلَا اقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ^{١٢}

13. And what should make thee know what the steep ascent is?

وَمَا اَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ^{١٣}

14. *It is* the freeing of a slave.

فَاَنَّ رَقَبَةً^{١٤}

15. "Or feeding on a day of hunger."⁴⁷³²

اَوْ اطْعَمْتُ يَوْمَ مَسْغَبَةٍ^{١٥}

16. An orphan near of kin,

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ^{١٦}

17. Or a poor man *lying* in the dust".⁴⁷³³

اَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ^{١٧}

^a76 : 9 ; 89 : 19.

before him a supreme object that he may devote all his faculties and energies to achieve it.

See also next verse.

4732. Important Words :

4731. Important Words :

اقتحم في الامر (attempted). They say اقتحم i.e., he rushed or plunged into the affair without consideration. اقتحم المنزل means, he entered the place suddenly and without permission; rushed suddenly upon the place; he invaded or attacked the place. اقتحم العقبة means, he ascended or attacked or rushed upon عقبة which means, hill; mountain; high place; steep road (Lane & Aqrab).

مسغبة (hunger) is derived from سغب which means, he was or became hungry or suffered hunger, together with fatigue. أسغب القوم means, the people entered upon a state of hunger. They say به مسغبة i.e., in him is hunger or hunger together with fatigue (Lane & Aqrab).

4733. Commentary :

Commentary

The verse means that through the Holy Prophet God had opened up for the Arabs all the ways and means by using which they could make unlimited spiritual and material progress but they refused to make the necessary sacrifices required to achieve the two objectives.

These verses (vv. 14—17) speak of the two methods to raise the moral stature of a people : (a) Freeing of the slaves, i.e., raising the suppressed, oppressed and depressed sections of the community to an equal partnership in life. (b) Helping the orphans and the poor to stand on their own legs and to become useful members of the community.

18. Then, he should have been of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to mercy^a. 4734

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالرَّحْمَةِ ۝

19. These are the people of the right hand^b. 4735

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينَةِ ۝

20. But those who disbelieve Our Signs, they are the people of the left hand^c. 4735-A

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا هُمْ أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ۝

21. Around them will be a fire closed over^d. 4736

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ۝

^a103 : 4.

^b56 : 28 ; 69 : 20 ; 84 : 8-9.

^c56 : 42 ; 69 : 26 ; 84 : 11-12.

^d104 : 9.

4734. Commentary :

The verse points out that the doing only of good actions mentioned in the foregoing verses is not enough for raising the all round stature of a community. Good ideals and right principles, combined with continuous and sustained adherence to the path of moral rectitude and the teaching of virtues to others, are equally essential for the attainment of the above-mentioned high aim.

4735. Commentary :

See 56 : 9.

4735-A. Commentary : See 56 : 10.

4736. Important Words :

مُوصَّدَةٌ (closed over) is derived from وصد. They say, وصد بالمكان *i.e.*, he remained in the place. أوصد الباب means, he closed or shut the door. موصدة means, shut, closed (Aqrah).

Commentary :

The disbelievers will burn in a species of fire which being closed on all sides will be most destructive.

CHAPTER 91

SŪRA AL-SHAMS

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction

This *Sūra* admittedly belongs to the very early Meccan period. Some scholars regard it as having been revealed in the first year of the Call; others assign it to the second or third year. It takes its title from the first word of the opening verse.

The five *Sūrās* (89-93) possess a striking similarity in subject-matter. In all of them great stress has been laid on the development of good morals, specially those good qualities that intimately concern and affect the progress and prosperity of a community. Muslims have been exhorted to create an atmosphere and an environment which should help to raise the standing and stature of the poor, depressed and suppressed section of their Community and should enable them to take their proper share in its activities.

The preceding Chapter contained a hint about the supreme object for which Abraham and his son Ishmael had built the Ka'ba. That supreme object is explained in the prayer—"Our Lord raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise (2 : 130). It is to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad and his great moral qualities that this *Sūra* refers. Towards its close the *Sūra* points out that moral greatness can be achieved by anyone who eschews evil and walks in the path of righteousness. The *Sūra* ends on the note that those who choose to defy Divine laws and adopt evil ways work out their own ruin.

سُورَةُ الشَّمْسِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. By the sun and his growing brightness,⁴⁷³⁷
3. And by the moon when she follows him (the sun),⁴⁷³⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①
وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ②
وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

4737. Important Words :

واو is a particle of swearing, meaning 'by' or 'I swear' or 'I cite as witness or call to witness' (Lane & Aqrab). See also 37 : 2.

الشمس (the sun), is substantive noun from شمس (shamasa). They say شمس الرجل i.e., the man abstained from and refused to obey because he considered himself too big to give allegiance to anyone. شمس الفرس means, the horse refused to be ridden or became rebellious against its rider and ran away refusing to be ridden by reason of the vehemence of its force of resistance. شمس لي فلان means, such a one showed enmity to me (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

God's swearing by His creatures is a method adopted by the Qur'an. The Quranic oaths have deep meaning underlying them. In ordinary transactions when a person takes an oath, his object is to supply the deficiency of insufficient testimony. The object and meaning of God's oaths must, however, be distinguished from those of the oaths of mortals. Divine laws reveal two aspects of the works of God., viz., the obvious and the inferential. The former are easily comprehensible; in the comprehension of the latter there is room for error. In the taking of oaths God has called attention to what may be inferred from what is obvious.

Taking the oaths mentioned in the following verses, we see that the sun and the moon, the day and the night, heavens and earth belong to the "obvious;" their properties as referred to in these verses are universally known and acknowledged. But the same properties found in man's soul are not obvious. To lead to an inference of the existence of these properties in the soul of man God has called to witness His obvious works.

Commentary :

"The sun" in the verse may refer to the sun of the spiritual universe—the Holy Prophet—who is the source of all light and who will continue to enlighten the world till the end of time. For a detailed note on this and the following five verses see v. 7.

4738. Important Words :

القمر (the moon). They say قمر الشيء i.e., the brightness of the thing became intense. قمر means, the moon; a star which borrows its light from the sun and reflects it on to the earth and thus removes the darkness of the night. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 54 : 2.

تلاها (follows him). تلاه means, I followed him or it immediately or without intervention. هو يتلونا means, he imitates such a one and follows what he does (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 103.

4. *And by the day when it reveals his glory,*⁴⁷³⁹

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّلَهَا ۝

5. *And by the night when it draws a veil over him,*⁴⁷⁴⁰

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ۝

6. *And by the heaven and its make,*⁴⁷⁴¹

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا ۝

7. *And by the earth and its expanse,*

وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا ۝

8. *And by the soul and its perfection—*⁴⁷⁴²

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ۝

Commentary :

“The moon” may be taken as referring to the Holy Prophet, who like the moon, draws his light from God and transmits it to the spiritually dark world. Or it may refer to those religious Divines and Reformers—particularly the Promised Messiah—who borrow the light of truth from the Holy Prophet and transmit it to the world to remove the darkness of moral and spiritual turpitude.

4739. Commentary :

“The day” may signify the time during which the Message of Islam and the truth of its Founder was further fortified and foundations were laid for the universal propagation of the vital doctrines of the new Faith. The reference in the verse may particularly be to the time of the rightly-guided Caliphs—the first four Successors of the Holy Prophet. In their time the light of Islam revealed its glory and splendour to the world.

4740. Commentary :

“The night” may refer to the period of decline and decadence of Muslims when the light of Islam had become veiled from the eyes of the world. These four verses (2-5) refer to four periods in the eventful career of Islam, viz., the

time of the Holy Prophet himself when the spiritual sun (the Holy Prophet) was shining in full splendour in the spiritual heaven; (2) the time of the Promised Messiah when the light derived from the Holy Prophet was being reflected on to a dark world; (3) the time of the Holy Prophet’s immediate Successors when the light of Islam was still shining and, (4) the period when spiritual darkness had spread over the world after the first three centuries of Islam which was its most glorious period.

4741. Commentary :

The particle ما (ma) in this and the next two verses is either مصدرية (maṣdariya) as in the text, or it stands for من meaning, ‘He Who.’ Thus in these verses attention has been focussed on the great Designer and Architect of the universe, and on the perfection and complete freedom from flaw or defect in the design and creation of man and the universe.

4742. Commentary :

The verse means that all the properties and forces which the great heavenly bodies such as the sun and the moon, etc., devote to the service of God’s creatures and to which reference has been made in the following verses bear witness to man having been endowed

9. And He revealed to it the ways of evil and the ways of righteousness—⁴⁷⁴³

10. He indeed *truly* prospers who purifies it,⁴⁷⁴⁴

11. And he who corrupts it is ruined.⁴⁷⁴⁵

12. *The tribe of Thamūd rejected the Divine Messenger* because of their rebelliousness.⁴⁷⁴⁶

فَالْهَمَهَا دُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۚ

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۖ

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۖ

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا ۖ

with similar qualities in a high degree. In fact, man is a universe in miniature and in his soul is represented, on a small scale, all that exists in the external universe. Like the sun he sheds his lustre over the world and enlightens it with the light of wisdom and knowledge. Like the moon he transmits to those who are in the dark the light of vision, inspiration and revelation which he borrows from the Great Original Source. He is bright like the day, and shows the ways of truth and virtue. Like the night he draws the veil over the faults and misdeeds of others, lightens their burdens and gives rest to the tired and the weary. Like the heavens he takes every distressed soul under his shelter and revives the lifeless earth with salubrious rain. Like the earth he submits in all humility and lowliness to be trampled under the feet by others as a trial for them, and from his purified soul various sorts of trees of knowledge and truth grow up in abundance, and with their shade, flowers and fruits, he regales the world. Such are the great Divines and Heavenly Reformers, of whom the greatest and the most perfect was the Holy Prophet.

4743. Commentary :

The verse means that after creating the celestial and the terrestrial systems, and bringing into existence man—the acme and apex of the whole creation—and endowing him with

great natural potentialities and qualities, God did not leave him alone. He implanted in his nature a feeling or sense of what is good or bad. Or the verse may mean that God reveals to man that he could achieve spiritual perfection by eschewing what is bad and wrong and adopting what is right and good because it is through Divine revelation that man could achieve it.

4744. Important Words :

زكا (purifies) is transitive from زكا (zaka) which means, it increased or augmented. زكا الزرع means, the harvest grew and increased. زكا الغلام means, the boy grew up. العلم يزكو على الاتفاق means, knowledge increases by expending (Lane & Aqrab).

4745. Important Words :

دسا (corrupts). دساها means, he hid it; he buried it; he corrupted it. دساها من means, who corrupts it; makes it vile by evil works; who makes it obscure or stuns its growth (Lane & Aqrab).

4746. Commentary :

In this and the next four verses is cited the example of the tribe of Thamūd who defied Divine guidance and opposed their Prophet working out thereby their own ruin.

13. When the most wretched among them got up,

إِذِ انْبَعَثَ أَشْقَىٰ ۝

14. Then the Messenger of Allah said, '*Leave alone* the she-camel of Allah, and *let her drink*.'⁴⁷⁴⁷

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا ۝

15. But they rejected him and hamstrung her, so their Lord destroyed them completely because of their sin, and made it (destruction) *overtake all of them alike*.⁴⁷⁴⁸

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوْهَا فَذَلِمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُ عَنْهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُفْقَهُوْنَ ۝

16. And He cared not for the consequence thereof.⁴⁷⁴⁹

وَلَا يَخَافُ عِقَابُهُ ۝

4747. Commentary :

The Prophet Ṣāliḥ kept the she-camel for travels. He rode on it from place to place to preach the Divine Message. Putting obstacles in the way of its free movements was tantamount to placing impediments in the way of Ṣāliḥ himself and preventing him from discharging the sacred duty entrusted to him. In fact, every Divine Reformer is ناقة الله (God's she-camel).

4748. Important Words :

دَمَدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ (destroyed them completely). They say دَمَدَمَ فلان على فلان i.e., such a one spoke to such a one in anger. عَلَيْهِ

means, he destroyed or crushed him completely or punished him thoroughly. دَمَدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ means, their Lord crushed them, punished them and destroyed them completely; or made the earth to quake with them or was angry with them (Lane & Aqrab).

4749. Commentary :

When a people incur Divine punishment and are thus destroyed, God does not care for those who survive the destruction or for the utterly miserable state to which they are reduced. The verse may also be taken as containing a warning to the Meccans that if they behaved like the Thamūd, they will be punished like them.

CHAPTER 92

SŪRA AL-LAIL

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

Prominent Muslim scholars, including two distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet—‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās and ‘Abdullah bin Zubair—are of the view that the *Sūra* was revealed very early at Mecca. William Muir also agrees with this opinion. The *Sūra* takes its title from the first word of the opening verse.

The *Sūra* possesses very close resemblance with some previous Chapters, especially with Al-Fajr and Al-Balad. In the immediately preceding *Sūra*, Al-Shams, it was hinted that the supreme object of the building of the Ka‘ba, which is the principal theme of *Sūra* Al-Balad, could not have been achieved without a great Divine Messenger—the soul *par excellence*. In the present *Sūra* we are told that when an ideal Teacher, as the Holy Prophet, is blessed with ideal disciples like his Companions, advance of the cause of Truth is doubly accelerated. The *Sūra* also mentions some of the prominent moral qualities that distinguished the Companions of the Holy Prophet. In contrast, two glaring bad qualities that lead to the undoing of a man are also mentioned.

سُورَةُ اللَّيْلِ مَكِّيَّةٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

2. ^bBy the night when it covers up!⁴⁷⁵⁰

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى ﴿٢﴾

3. ^cAnd by the day when it shines forth,⁴⁷⁵¹

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى ﴿٣﴾

4. ^dAnd by the creation of the male and the female,⁴⁷⁵²

وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى ﴿٤﴾

^a See 1 : 1. ^b91 : 5. ^c91 : 4 ^d36 : 37; 51 : 50; 78 : 9.

4750. Commentary :

In this verse "the night when it covers up" has been cited as a witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet. It is a Divine law that when darkness spreads over the earth, a Heavenly Reformer is raised. And now that humanity is groping in spiritual darkness God has raised the Holy Prophet in order that His servants might be rescued from the "Slough of Despond" in which they are stuck up.

In the preceding *Sūra* the principal subject of discussion was Al-Shams, i.e., the Holy Prophet, who is the source and spring of all light. This is why mention of the sun and the day precedes that of the moon and the night. But in the present *Sūra* a contrast is instituted between believers and disbelievers, and as the latter are generally larger in number and wield greater power and influence, mention of the night precedes that of the day.

4751. Commentary :

The verse signifies that with the appearance of the Holy Prophet the night of disbelief is

about to give place to the day of belief.

By the substitution of the word *تَجَلَّى* (shines forth) in this verse in place of *جَلَّاهَا* (reveals its glory) in the corresponding verse in the preceding *Sūra* it is hinted that whereas in the preceding *Sūra* the emphasis was on the high spiritual stature of the Teacher, in the present *Sūra* it is on the great ability of the pupils to learn and assimilate the teaching.

4752. Commentary :

Procreation of man depends upon the coming together of two individuals of opposite sexes. The characteristic quality of the one (the male) is to give, of the other (the female) to receive. Like the physical world there are in the spiritual world males—God's great Prophets and Divine Reformers—who teach and guide, and there are also spiritual females—their followers—who receive and benefit by the Divine teaching. The verse embodies a hint that by the coming together of the perfect Teacher—the Holy Prophet—and the ideal pupils—his Companions—a new world is about to be born.

5. Surely, your strivings are diverse.⁴⁷⁵³

6. Then as for him who gives for the cause of Allah and is righteous,

7. And testifies to the truth of what is right,⁴⁷⁵⁴

8. "We will provide for him every facility."⁴⁷⁵⁵

إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّى ۝

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى ۝

وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى ۝

فَسَنِّيئِرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى ۝

487 : 9.

4753. Important Words :

شَتَّى (diverse). They say شت الاشياء i.e., he disunited or dispersed the things. أمر شت means, a broken or disorganized state of affairs. قوم شتى means, a people separated or consisting of sundry bodies. جاؤوا اشتاتاً means, they came separate (Lane).

Commentary :

The verse draws attention to the widely divergent goals of believers and disbelievers, and also to the disparity in the endeavours they make to achieve their respective goals. Whereas the efforts of believers are devoted to the dissemination of truth, those of disbelievers are directed towards opposing it and putting obstacles and impediments in its way. The results of the two efforts must inevitably be different.

4754. Commentary :

This and the preceding verse mention three characteristics of persons who are successful in life, viz., they spend in the cause of truth out of what God has bestowed upon them, and are always on their guard against doing anything that may harm others. Over and above this they adopt good principles and right ideals. Briefly, right action, right feeling and right thinking are the three essential prerequisites for national progress and prosperity which believers possess in an ample measure.

4755. Commentary :

The verse means that the person who possesses the three characteristic qualities mentioned in the preceding two verses, will find that his actions are productive of the desired results. Or it may mean that the doing of good deeds will become easy for such a person and he will enjoy doing them.

9. But as for him who is niggardly and is *disdainfully* indifferent,⁴⁷⁵⁶

10. And rejects what is right,

11. We will make easy for him *the path* to distress.⁴⁷⁵⁷

12. ^aAnd his wealth shall not avail him when he perishes.⁴⁷⁵⁸

13. ^bSurely, it is for Us to guide;

14. And to Us belongs the Hereafter as well as the present world.⁴⁷⁵⁹

15. So I warn you of a flaming Fire

16. ^cNone shall enter it but the most wicked one.

17. ^dWho rejects *the truth* and turns *his* back.⁴⁷⁶⁰

18. But the righteous *one* shall be kept away from it,

19. Who gives his wealth that he may be purified.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ۖ

وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ

فَسَنِيئِرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ۖ

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰ ۖ

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ۖ

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَىٰ ۖ

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ۖ

لَا يَصْلُهَا إِلَّا الْاَشَقَىٰ ۖ

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۖ

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْاَتَقَىٰ ۖ

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۖ

^a3: 11; 58: 18; 111: 3.

^b2: 273; 28: 57.

^c20: 75; 87: 12-13.

^d20: 49.

4756. Commentary :

In contrast to the three good qualities mentioned in the preceding two verses (6—7), the three bad qualities that lead to the undoing of a man are mentioned in these two verses (9—10).

4757. Commentary :

The verse means that the actions of the person referred to in the preceding verse miss their mark and produce results contrary to what he expects or desires. Or it may mean that the doing of good deeds becomes difficult for such a person.

4758. Commentary :

The expression "When he perishes" signifies,

that when Divine decree regarding his destruction comes into operation, nothing can avail him to avert or escape Divine punishment.

4759. Commentary :

The wicked disbelievers face failure in this life and will suffer punishment in the Hereafter because both the worlds are under God's control.

4760. Commentary :

كذب (rejects the truth) signifies that the sinful disbeliever holds wrong beliefs and تولى implies that he does not make use of right feeling, right thinking and right actions. Thus he is deprived of these qualities.

20. And he owes no favour to anyone, which is to be repaid,

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْزَىٰ ۖ

21. Except *that he gives his wealth* to seek the pleasure of his Lord, the Most High.⁴⁷⁶¹

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۚ

22. And soon will He be well pleased *with him*.

هُوَ وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَىٰ ۚ

4761. Commentary :

The righteous believer does good to others, not in return for any good received from them

but actuated by a desire to be of use to God's creatures and to win the pleasure of his Heavenly Lord and Master.

CHAPTER 93

SŪRA AL-DUHĀ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

After the first two or three *Sūrās* had been revealed, Revelation ceased to come to the Holy Prophet for some time. The present *Sūra* is among those which were revealed soon after Revelation started coming again. Thus the *Sūra* should be deemed to have been revealed very early at Mecca. Noldeke places it after Al-Balad, and Muir puts it near to *Sūra* Al-Inshirāḥ in chronological order. It is surprising that such a bigoted Christian Missionary as Mr. Wherry should also have assigned a very early date to this *Sūra* which embodies a prophecy that every morrow of the Holy Prophet would be better than his yesterday, and this process will continue till his cause would meet with complete success. This prophecy had remarkable fulfilment in the mounting triumphs of the Holy Prophet.

In subject-matter the *Sūra* very much resembles some of its predecessors. Like them it lays stress on the evils to which the Meccans were specially addicted, with this difference that in this *Sūra* the Holy Prophet and his followers have been enjoined to make proper use of their money, but in the preceding *Sūrās* a contrast was drawn between the believers' and the disbelievers' treatment of the orphans and the needy. Moreover, in the preceding *Sūra* it was briefly stated that the righteous believer spends his wealth in the way of God but in the *Sūra* under comment mention is made of the blessings that God bestows upon His chosen servants with a particular reference to the Holy Prophet. Thus the *Sūra* serves as a sequel to the one preceding it.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By the *growing* brightness of the Forenoon,⁴⁷⁶²

3. ^bAnd by the night when its darkness spreads out,⁴⁷⁶³

4. Thy Lord has not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased *with thee*.⁴⁷⁶⁴

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

وَالضُّحَى ②

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى ③

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَى ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b81 : 18.

4762. Commentary :

"The brightness of the Foresoon" signifies the rise and progress of Islam. The verse, therefore, purports to say that the phenomenal rise of Islam will establish the truth of the Holy Prophet. الضحى may also refer to the particular forenoon when the Holy Prophet entered Mecca at the head of an army of ten thousand holy warriors and the Ka'ba was cleared of idols.

4763. Important Words :

سجى (spreads out). سجا الليل means, the night was quiet; was or became dark and its darkness extended ; was or became continuous ; or the night covered by its darkness (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse signifies ' that the prolonged period of the decline of Islam will also bear witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet in that

according to his prophecies the decline will be followed by its renaissance.

"The Night" may also have reference to that particular night when after the fall of darkness the Holy Prophet went out of his house and took refuge in Cave Thaur along with Abū Bakr. In fact the night when the Holy Prophet left Mecca and the day Mecca fell, give in a nutshell the various ups and downs of the Holy Prophet's whole career.

4764. Important Words :

قللى الرجل (has forsaken). They say قللى الرجل i.e., he hated the man and disliked him so much that he forsook him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Every day and night of the Holy Prophet: his great successes and temporary set-backs; his joys and tribulations; his devotions at night and activities in the day, all bear out that God was with him.

5. Surely *every hour* ^athat follows is better for thee than *the one* that precedes.⁴⁷⁶⁵

6. And thy Lord will ^bsoon give thee and thou wilt be well pleased.^{4765-A}

7. Did He not find thee an orphan and give *thee* shelter?⁴⁷⁶⁶

وَلِلْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ۝

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ۝

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ۝

^a87 : 18. ^b108 : 2.

4765. Commentary :

The verse means that every succeeding moment of the Holy Prophet's life is better than the preceding. To mention a few landmarks in his career, one may observe that he left Mecca with a single Companion, a price having been put on his head. He entered the same town after a brief period of eight years at the head of ten thousand devoted followers. At Badr there were only 313 Muslims with him and at Uhud more than double that number, and in the Battle of the Ditch the number grew to several thousand, till at the Last Pilgrimage more than one hundred thousand believers marched under his banner. The successes of the Holy Prophet continued after his death. Islam went from strength to strength till it spread, within a few decades, over a large part of the then known world.

The reference in the verse may also be to the Latter Days when the renaissance of Islam was to take place. The verse may also mean that Divine Reformers will continue to appear among Muslims during periods of decline to impart to the Faith a new life and a new vigour.

4765-A. Commentary :

The *Sūra* being one of the earliest revelations received at a time when those who had respond-

ed to the Call of the Holy Prophet could be counted on one's fingers, the verse under comment contains a message of hope and good cheer wherein the Prophet is told that the time is fast approaching when his cause will triumph and he will be blessed with Divine favours—in this life and the Hereafter—to his heart's content.

4766. Important Words :

يَتِيم (orphan) is derived from يَتَم (yatama) which means, he became fatherless, an orphan; was or became unique; incomparable; (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The Holy Prophet was an orphan in fact, as well as figuratively. His orphanhood was of the extreme kind. His father died before he was born, leaving no property. His mother died when he was hardly six years old and his grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib, who took charge of him after his mother's death, died two years later, leaving him under the care of his uncle, a man of scanty means. Thus the Prophet was deprived of parental care and love in his early childhood. Yet he received love and affection from his juniors and seniors, his Companions and compatriots in a large measure such that no woman-born had ever received the like of it before or after him or is likely to receive in future.

8. And He found thee wandering
in search of Him and guided thee unto
Himself.⁴⁷⁶⁷

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ۖ

9. And He found thee in want and
enriched thee.⁴⁷⁶⁸

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ۖ

10. So the orphan, oppress not,

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ۖ

11. And him who seeks thy help,
"chide not,

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ۖ

a17 : 24.

4767. Important Words :

ضال (wandering) is derived from ضل which means, he erred or went astray; he was perplexed and was unable to see the right course; he was entirely engrossed or was lost in the love of a thing; he wandered in search of a thing and persevered in the search. ضل الماء في اللبن means, the water became hidden in the milk, etc. (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of the word ضل given above under Important Words, the verse may be interpreted thus : (1) The Holy Prophet wandered in search of the ways and means to attain to God, and God revealed to him the Law which guided him to the desired goal. (2) He was perplexed and did not know how to find the path that led to the attainment of his quest and God guided him to it. (42 : 53). (3) He was entirely lost in the love of God and did not know how to find Him but God led him to Himself (12 : 9). (4) He was hidden from the eyes of the world. God discovered him and chose him for the task of leading people to Him. Thus the word ضال has not been used in disapprobation but in praise of the Holy Prophet. The

word in the sense of 'gone astray' does not and cannot apply to the Holy Prophet since according to another Quranic verse (53 : 3) he was immune to error or going astray. Moreover, the six concluding verses of the Sūra reveal a certain sequence—vv. 7, 8 & 9 standing in close relationship and corresponding to vv. 10, 11 & 12 respectively ; the ضال of verse 8 being substituted by سائل of verse 11, explains the significance of the former word which is, "one who sought God's help to be guided to Him."

The verse may also be interpreted as : And He found thee lost in thy love for thy people, and provided thee with guidance for them.

4768. Important Words :

عائل (one in want) is derived from عال . They say عال الرجل i.e. the man had a large family to support; he became poor. عال عياله means, he fed, nourished or supported his family. عال الشيء فلانا means, the thing oppressed or distressed such a one (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The Holy Prophet started life as a poor orphan but ended by being the undisputed master of the whole of Arabia.

12. And the bounty of thy Lord,
proclaim.⁴⁷⁶⁹

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ۝١٢

4769. Commentary :

Verses 7, 8 & 9, speak of God's favours on the Holy Prophet and in vv. 10, 11 and 12, the Prophet is enjoined to show his gratitude for Divine favours by doing similar favours to his fellow beings. The commandment applies equally to his followers.

CHAPTER 94

SŪRA AL-INSHIRĀH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks:

Since the *Sūra* is closely connected with the one preceding it so as to form an extension of the subject-matter of the latter *Sūra*, it was obviously revealed at Mecca, about the same time as the other *Sūra*, i.e., in the second or third year of the Call. Whereas the preceding *Sūra* spoke of the increasing prosperity of the Holy Prophet's cause, the present *Sūra* alludes to some distinguishing signs and marks which constitute a sure guarantee of the ultimate triumph of a mission. First of all one should be firmly convinced of the truth of one's claim and should possess necessary means for propagating it; one should be able to attract people's attention, and the Divine decree should be working in his favour. In the *Sūra* under comment the Holy Prophet is described as being in possession of all these in full measure. His cause is, therefore, bound to prevail.

سُورَةُ الْاِنْشِرَاحِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٩٤)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. Have We not opened for thee thy bosom,⁴⁷⁷⁰
3. And removed from thee thy burden
4. Which had *well nigh* broken thy back,⁴⁷⁷¹
5. And We exalted thy name?⁴⁷⁷²

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①
 أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ②
 وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ ③
 الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ④
 وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1.

4770. Important Words :

شرح (opened). شرح المسألة means, he explained the question. شرح الكلام means, he understood the talk. شرح الشئ means, he guarded the thing, he preserved it شرح صدره means, he was pleased with the thing. The breast symbolically being the seat of knowledge and feelings, its expansion (in the present context) signifies its illumination with wisdom, Divine light and peace and its vastness for the reception of what was to be revealed to the Holy Prophet (Lane, Aqrab & Muḥīt).

Commentary :

In view of different meanings of the word شرح, the verse may have one or all of the following interpretations : 1. God had protected the heart of the Holy Prophet from all harmful influences. It was impossible for evil to enter it. 2. God was the Prophet's own Preceptor and Teacher and besides temporal knowledge He had opened his breast to comprehend the Divine mysteries. 3. The Prophet never suffered from straitness of the heart and was endowed with patience and fortitude to such a degree that even the hardest tribulation could not disturb his peace of mind.

4771. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet had been saddled with such a nerve-racking and back-breaking task as had never been entrusted to a human being, *i.e.*, first to raise a degenerate people from the depths of moral turpitude to the peaks of spiritual excellence and, then through them to cleanse and purify the whole of mankind of the dross of iniquity, ignorance and superstition. This was indeed a very heavy responsibility which had almost crushed the Prophet under its weight, but God lightened his burden in that He gave him devoted and sincere Companions who shared his burden and helped him in the discharge of his manifold and hard duties.

4772. Commentary :

The *Sūra* was revealed in the second or third year of the Call, at a time when the Prophet was hardly known outside his immediate neighbourhood, but very soon he rose to be the best known and most respected and successful of all religious Teachers. No leader, religious or temporal, has so commanded the love and respect of his followers as has the Holy Prophet.

6. Surely, there is ease after hardship.⁴⁷⁷³

7. *Aye*, surely, there is ease after hardship.⁴⁷⁷⁴

8. So when thou art free from thy immediate task, strive hard.

9. "And to thy Lord do thou turn with full attention."⁴⁷⁷⁵

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ ۝

وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ۝

473 : 9; 110 : 4.

4773. Commentary :

The verse holds a message of hope and good cheer for the Holy Prophet. He is comforted with the assurance that whenever Islam would be in difficulty, God would raise a Reformer from among his followers who would restore to it its former glory and greatness. Pointing out the fact that one has to face difficulties and hardships in this life the Prophet is assured that his tribulation would prove to be of short duration and would soon be followed by increasing ease, success and prosperity.

4774. Commentary :

Repetition of the words, "Surely, there is ease after hardship," signifies that Islam will have to pass through very hard times but on two occasions it will have to face a challenge to its very existence, first at its birth and then in the Latter Days,—and on both these occasions

it will emerge from the ordeal with renewed strength. These verses also indicate that the hardships with which the Holy Prophet and Muslims are faced are temporary, but his successes would be permanent and ever-expanding.

4775. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is told here that as endless vistas of spiritual progress lie before him, after he has conquered the difficulties that bar his way, he should not rest satisfied with his success, but having scaled one peak he should strive to climb the next, and his attention should be wholly directed towards regenerating a fallen humanity and towards establishing God's Kingdom on earth. The verse may also signify that when the Prophet has finished his day's work of teaching and training his followers and other temporal affairs, he should turn to God as ever with all his heart, for his spiritual journey knows no end.

CHAPTER 95

SŪRA AL-TĪN

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This is an early Meccan *Sūra*. That is the view of 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās and Ibn-Zubair. Noldeke places it after Chapter 85.

In the preceding *Sūra* arguments based on reason and commonsense were given in support of the claim that the Holy Prophet's future would be very glorious as he possessed all those qualities which are necessary for making a success of one's mission. In the present *Sūra* examples of some Divine Messengers have been cited to show that as the Holy Prophet's circumstances resembled the circumstances of these Messengers, therefore, like them he too will achieve success. In Chapters 89-94 the Holy Prophet's migration to Medina and his subsequent success were hinted at in one form or another—in some by implication, in others by oblique references, and in yet others in clear words. In the *Sūra* under comment it is hinted that the former Prophets also had to leave their homes for the sake of their missions.

سُورَةُ التِّينِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٩٥)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."⁴⁷⁷⁶

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ١

2. By the Fig and the Olive,

وَالتِّينِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ ٢

3. And by ^b Mount Sinai,⁴⁷⁷⁷

وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ ٣

4. And by this City of Security^c,⁴⁷⁷⁸

وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ ٤

^a See 1 : 1. ^b 52 : 2. ^c 90 : 2.

4776. Commentary :

See 1 : 1.

4777. Commentary:

See next verse. The word سِينِينَ being in the plural shows that there are several mountains of this name in that region. On one of these God manifested Himself to Moses.

4778. Commentary.

The Fig, the Olive, Mount Sinai and "this City of Security" have been invoked as witnesses to support and substantiate the claim made in the *Sūra* that the Holy Prophet will succeed in his mission. Various views have been expressed as to what is meant by these things and how do they support the above-mentioned claim? Here are some of these views:

1. "The Fig" and "the Olive" are symbolic of Jesus, "Mount Sinai" of Moses; and "this City of Security" of the Holy Prophet. These three verses together point to the well-known

Biblical reference, *viz.*, "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir with them; and He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them, (Deut. 33 : 2).

2. "The Fig" is symbolic of the Mosaic Dispensation and "the Olive" of the Islamic Dispensation. In the Bible good people and the bad among the Israelites have been likened to two baskets of good and bad figs (Jer. chap. 24 : 1—5); and in the Qur'ān Islamic Teaching has been likened to "the oil of a blessed olive tree which is neither of the East nor of the West" (24 : 36). This simile has been further expressed in more concrete form by the words "Mount Sinai" and "this City of Security." The simile is very apt, since "the Fig" and "the Olive" are both used as medicines and as articles of food, with this difference that the former tastes sweet but rots very soon, while the latter is used as fruit, its oil is in general use and when mixed with condiments it preserves and protects pickled article from rotting and decaying.

5. Surely, We have created man in
"the best make":⁴⁷⁷⁹

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ۝

^a 23 : 13—15.

3. According to some Commentators "the Fig" stands for Buddhism, "the Olive" for Christianity, "Mount Sinai" for Judaism and "this City of Security" for the Holy Prophet of Islam.

4. But perhaps the best explanation of the symbolism used in these verses is the one according to which the four words represent four periods in the history of human evolution, "the Fig" representing the era of Adam, "the Olive" that of Noah, "Mount Sinai" that of Moses and "this City of Security" the Islamic epoch. This explanation finds ample support from the Bible and the Qur'an. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and found themselves naked, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Gen. 3 : 7). About Noah we read: "And the dove came in to him in the evening; and lo! in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off; so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth" (Gen. 8 : 11) And it is an accepted fact that Moses received the Divine Law on Mount Sinai and that Mecca, the birth-place of Islam was, from time immemorial, regarded as, and proved to be, the "City of Security." These four periods represent the four cycles through which man had to pass to reach the stage of complete development. In the cycle of Adam the foundations of human civilization were laid. Noah was the founder of the *Sharī'at*. In the cycle of Moses the details of the *Sharī'at* were revealed, while with the advent of the Holy Prophet the Divine Law became complete and perfect in all its manifold aspects, and man attained his complete intellectual, social, moral and spiritual development.

The verse signifies that the circumstances of the Holy Prophet resemble those of Adam, Noah and Moses. Like them he will suffer hardships in the beginning and like them will succeed in the end.

4779. Important Words :

تَقْوِيمٌ (make, formation or build) is inf. noun from قَوَّمَ They say قَوَّمَ الْأَمْرَ i.e., he managed the affair well. قَوَّمَ الشَّيْءَ means, he set the thing right or made it straight or even. (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary :

The verse may mean :

1. Man has been endowed with the best natural powers and qualities, by making use of which he can make infinite progress.

2. God has endowed man with a creative power i.e., he can be a good architect and builder in both the physical and spiritual senses.

The question naturally arises : When man has been endowed with such wonderful natural powers and capacities, why does he sin? Various schools have their own explanations for this baffling question. According to one school man is prone to evil, though he has also been endowed with the power to correct and reform himself. This is the Buddhist conception of evil. (ii) According to Christian belief man is by nature sinful, because Adam faltered and committed a sin, and his progeny inherited the taint of sin from their progenitor. (iii) The third school holds the view that man is not born with a good or bad nature.

6. Then, *if he acts unjustly*, We degrade him as the lowest of the low,⁴⁷⁸⁰

7. "Save those who believe and do good works; so for them is an unfailing reward.

8. Then what is there to give the lie to thee, after *this*, with regard to the judgment?⁴⁷⁸¹

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ۝

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ

غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ۝

فَمَا يَكْذِبُكَ بَعْدَ الدِّينِ ۝

^a11 : 12; 41 : 9; 84 : 26.

He comes into the world with some natural inclinations and instinctive impulses and it is the sort of education which he gets or the atmosphere in which he moves that make him good or bad. Some mystics hold the view that man is deprived of all freedom of will or action and is completely denied discretion or volition and that he is a helpless victim of predetermined set of conditions and circumstances which he cannot overcome. (iv) The protagonists of the theory of Transmigration of Souls are of the view that man is born to suffer for the evil deeds he does in a former existence and goes through various forms of re-birth to cleanse himself of his sins. All these views evidently contravene human reason and offend against his moral sense. According to Islam, however, man is born with a pure and unsullied nature, with a natural tendency to do good, but he has also been given a large measure of freedom of will and action to mould himself as he chooses. He has been endowed with great natural powers and qualities to make unlimited moral progress and to rise spiritually so high as to become the mirror in which Divine attributes are reflected. But if he misuses God-given powers and attributes he sinks lower than even beasts and brutes and becomes the Devil incarnate as the next verse shows. Briefly, the verse signifies that

man is blessed with great potentialities for good or evil.

4780. **Commentary :**

If "man" is taken to mean the whole mankind the verse signifies that good precedes evil. This is Islam's main difference with the protagonists of the theory of man's moral evolution, according to whom evil precedes good. If man is taken as an individual the verse means that God has bestowed upon man great natural faculties and powers and has revealed guidance in order that by making right use of them and following Divinely-revealed guidance he might reach the high destiny intended for him.

4781. **Important Words :**

دين (judgment) is inf. noun from دان which means, he obeyed. دين means, judgment; religion: compulsion against will; righteousness; argument; plan, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse purports to say that when man has been created to achieve a very high spiritual destiny and God sent His Messengers such as Adam, Noah, Moses and the Holy Prophet, to

9. Is not Allah the Best of Judges?

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ ③

help him achieve his great goal and that if he does not make proper use of his natural faculties and rejects the Divine Message, opposing God's Messengers he is punished, then, who can, with reason, deny that there is a Day of Judgment in this life and in the Hereafter, and that the commandments of God Who is the Best of Judges cannot be defied with impunity and man's actions will not go unrequited. This is the simple explanation of this verse. But in view of the different significations of the word دين given under Important Words, the verse may also mean :

- (1) How can the pagan Quraish, after having seen the evil end to which opponents of God's Messengers always come, possibly hope that they will escape God's judgment and will not be punished and the Holy Prophet will not succeed?
- (2) When God has been revealing the *Shari'at*

from time immemorial, then why do disbelievers find fault with the Holy Prophet, if he has brought a new Law?

- (3) The disbelievers can advance no sane or solid argument against the claim of the Holy Prophet. Any charge or objection they raise against him equally applies to all Divine Messengers.
- (4) In view of the innumerable Signs shown in favour of the Holy Prophet, no plan or argument can succeed against him or can disprove his claim.
- (5) No truly righteous man can reject the Holy Prophet.
- (6) After having known the tragic end of the opponents of God's Messengers who will dare say that he can compel the Holy Prophet to give up his mission?

CHAPTER 96

SŪRA AL-‘ALAQ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation and Context :

The first five verses of the *Sūra* have been universally admitted to be the first revelation which descended upon the Holy Prophet in Cave Hira', on a night in the month of Ramaḍān, 13 years before Hijra, corresponding to 610 A.D. On that "Night of Destiny" when the Prophet lay on the floor of the Cave, his mind locked in deep contemplation, these verses were revealed and the words became branded on his soul. "These blessed verses," says Ibn Khathīr, "are the first act of mercy with which God blessed His servants." After the first revelation some verses of *Sūra* Al-Qalam are said to have been revealed, followed by some verses of *Sūra* Al-Muzzammil. Then there occurred a break of a year or so after which revelation started coming in quick succession.

The connection of this *Sūra* with the one preceding it consists in the fact that in that *Sūra* it was stated that from time immemorial, in order to meet the need of the age, God had been sending His Messengers and Prophets and had been revealing His will to them. First came Adam who was followed by Prophet Noah, and after a succession of Divine Messengers, appeared Moses, the greatest of the Israelite Prophets, and last of all came the Holy Prophet. In the *Sūra* under comment it is stated that just as the birth of man is the result of a gradual process of development, so is his spiritual evolution. The Prophets whose examples were cited in the preceding *Sūra* attained to different stages of spiritual development, but the Holy Prophet represents in his person the best specimen of man's complete spiritual evolution.

Incidentally, one possible objection relating to the revelation of this *Sūra* and its place in the existing order of the *Sūras* of the Qur'ān, may be removed here. It may well be asked, if this *Sūra* was revealed long before the one preceding it, why it should have been placed after the latter *Sūra*? The answer is that it is an outstanding miracle of the Qur'ān that it was revealed in an order which was best suited for the needs of the period during which it was revealed and was arranged for permanent use in the existing order which was best suited for the needs of coming generations till the end of time. That is why the present *Sūra*, some of whose verses were the first to be revealed, finds a place among the last few Chapters of the Qur'ān.

سُورَةُ الْعَلَقِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. "Proclaim thou in the name of thy Lord Who created,⁴⁷⁸²

3. Created man from a ^bclot of blood.⁴⁷⁸³

4. Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Generous.⁴⁷⁸⁴

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ②

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ③

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b23 : 15; 40 : 68; 75 : 39.

4782. Important Words :

اقْرَأ (proclaim) is derived from قرء which means, he collected together the thing; put it together part to part. قرأت القرآن means, I recited or read the Qur'ān uninterruptedly or recited it chanting (syn. أنشد). قرء عليه القرآن means, he read or recited to him the Qur'ān. قرأ عليه السلام means, he conveyed or delivered to him the salutation. Thus اقرأ means, read, recite, convey, proclaim or collect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The very first word of the verse shows that the Qur'ān was meant to be read and proclaimed, to be collected and put together and conveyed to the whole world. Moreover, the verse embodies a prophecy that the Qur'ān will be written and repeatedly read and recited. It is an undeniable fact of history that as soon as a portion of the Qur'ān was revealed it was committed to writing and that among all religious Scriptures the Qur'ān is the most widely read. The mention in the verse of the Divine attribute رب (the Lord) Who cherishes and sustains man through all the different stages of his development signifies that the spiritual development of man was to be gradual and in stages till it was to find its full consummation in the Holy Prophet.

4783. Important Words :

علق (clot of blood) is inf. noun from علق ('aliqa). They say علق به i.e., it hung to it, clung, clave or stuck fast to it; it concerned him or it. علقها او علق بها means, he loved her. علق means, a clot of blood; love (Lane & Aqrab). خلق من علق is an Arabic phrase meaning, love forms a part of his nature; it is ingrained in his nature. See also 21 : 38 & 30 : 55.

Commentary :

The verse signifies that love of God is ingrained in the nature of man, and that it was natural that there should have been someone in whom this instinctive impulse should find its completest manifestation. This was the Holy Prophet who loved his Creator with all his mind, heart and soul. The verse also signifies that as man's physical development is gradual, so is his spiritual development, and this gradual development culminated in the Holy Prophet.

4784. Commentary :

The verse purports to say that the more the Qur'ān is read and proclaimed to the world, the more the holiness of God and the dignity of man will be recognised and appreciated. The verse may also imply a prophecy that through

5. Who taught by the pen,⁴⁷⁸⁵
6. "Taught man what he knew not."⁴⁷⁸⁶
7. Nay! man does indeed transgress^{b, 4787}
8. Because he thinks himself to be independent.
9. Surely, unto thy Lord is the return.^c
10. Hast thou seen him who forbids^d
11. A servant of Ours when he prays?⁴⁷⁸⁸

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۖ
 عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۖ
 كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِكَفٍّ ۖ
 أَنْ رَأَاهُ اسْتَغْنَى ۖ
 إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ۖ
 أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَىٰ
 عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰ ۖ

^a4 : 114; 55 : 5.

^b37 : 31.

^c5 : 49; 21 : 36; 53 : 43.

^d2 : 115; 72 : 20.

the reading, preaching and proclaiming of the Qur'an a place of great honour will accrue to the Holy Prophet and his followers.

4785. Commentary :

This verse also embodies a prophecy that "pen" would play a great part in committing the Qur'an to writing and in preserving and protecting it from being lost or interfered with. It further refers to the great contribution that "the pen" was to make towards the propagation and dissemination of spiritual sciences and Divine secrets revealed by the Qur'an and of the physical sciences to which the study of the Qur'an imparted a great stimulus. It is really very significant that frequent mention should have been made of "pen" in a Book which was revealed among a people who had no respect for, and made rare use of it, and which was revealed to a person who himself did not know how to read and write.

4786. Commentary :

Not even one hundredth part of what the Qur'an has taught about Divine Unity, Revelation, Angels, Life after death, Ethics, and other kindred subjects is to be found in any other revealed Scripture.

4787. Commentary :

The particle *كَلَّا* is sometimes used to impart emphasis and is expressive of certainty. Or it is used in the sense of 'nay' or 'never'. The verse means that though man has been endowed with great natural powers and has been created in the best make, he errs grievously if he thinks that he can ignore God's help and guidance. He constantly stands in need of Divine assistance because his capacities and capabilities are at best limited.

4788. Commentary :

The verse is of general application. But it may in particular refer to the Holy Prophet.

12. Tell me if he (Our servant) follows the guidance.

13. Or enjoins righteousness, *what will be the end of the forbider?*

14. Tell me if he (the forbider) rejects and turns his back,⁴⁷⁸⁹

15. *Does he not know that Allah sees him?

16. Nay, if he desist not, We will assuredly *seize and drag* him by the forelock,⁴⁷⁹⁰

17. A forelock, lying, sinful.

18. Then let him call his associates,⁴⁷⁹¹

19. We *too* will call *Our* angels of punishment.⁴⁷⁹²

أَرَعَيْتَ إِنْ كَانَ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَىٰ

أَرَعَيْتَ إِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ

كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ

نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ

سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ

⁴⁹⁰ : 8.

4789. Commentary :

تولى (rejects) relates to beliefs and (turns his back) to actions and deeds, meaning that his beliefs are wrong and his deeds bad.

4790. Important Words :

نسفع (we shall seize him and drag him). نسفعه means, he made a mark upon it with hot iron; he struck or slapped his face. سفع بناصيته means, he seized his forelock and dragged him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verses (10—18) though generally applying to every haughty and hardened disbeliever, have been taken by some Commentators to refer particularly to Abū Jahl, leader of the Quraish of Mecca. He was in the forefront in annoying, opposing and persecuting the Holy Prophet and the Muslims. Some of the

slaves who had embraced Islam were dragged at his instance by the forelock in the streets of Mecca. After the defeat at Badr, the dead bodies of some of the leaders of the Quraish, Abū Jahl among them, were dragged by their forelocks and thrown into a pit dug for that purpose. That was a fit punishment for the treatment they had meted out to the helpless Muslims years before at Mecca.

4791. Important Words :

نادى (associates) is derived from نادى. They say نادى القوم i.e., the people gathered and came to the meeting. ندى or النادى means, an assembly (Aqrab).

4792. Important Words :

لزبانية (angels of punishment) is the plural of زبانية which is derived from زبن. They say

20. Nay, yield not thou to him, but
 "prostrate thyself and draw near to
 Allah.

كَلَّا لَا تُطَعِّهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ ۝ السَّجْدَةِ

^a 3 : 44; 22 : 78; 41 : 38.

زنبه *i.e.*, he pushed or thrust it, or thrust it
 away. زينت الناقة means, the she-camel pushed
 away the milker on the occasion of being milked.
 زبانية means, armed attendants or officers or

soldiers or the prefect of police (syn.
 شرطة); angels or guards of Hell, because they
 push the sinners into it; angels of punishment
 (Lane & Aqrab).

CHAPTER 97

SŪRA AL-QADR

(Revealed before Hira)

Introduction :

Some Commentators of the Qur'ān think that this *Sūra* was revealed at Medina. This, however, is a mistaken opinion, being against all historical data. Al-Qadr is definitely a Meccan *Sūra* and belongs to the very early phase of the Call. Such eminent and respected authorities as Ibn Abbās, Ibn Zubair and 'Ā'isha subscribe to this view. Noldeke places it after Chapter 93, which was one of the earliest *Sūrās* revealed at Mecca.

The preceding *Sūra* had opened with the Divine command to the Prophet to recite the Qur'ān and preach and proclaim its Message to the world. The present *Sūra* deals with the high status, dignity and excellence of the Qur'ān, which is declared in the opening verse to have been revealed in "*Lailat al-Qadr*" i.e., the Night of Destiny, Decree or Dignity. This Night of Destiny or Decree, has been described, elsewhere in the Qur'ān, as the Blessed Night (44 : 4). The *Sūra* has only five little verses, excluding the *Bismillah* and yet its meaning and content is of deep spiritual significance.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Surely, We sent it down on the Night of Destiny^{b, 4793}

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ②

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b44 : 4.

4793. Important Words :

القدر (Destiny) is derived from قدر (*qadara*). They say قدر الشيء *i.e.*, he measured or decreed the things; he thought upon the thing or affair and considered its issue, or result and compared one part of it with another; he estimated, honoured or magnified the thing. قدرت على الشيء means, I had power or ability to do the thing. قدر means, measure, limit or number; value, worth, greatness; dignity, majesty; power; decree or destiny, ordinance (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

Generally ليل and ليلة mean the same thing *i.e.*, night, but according to the famous lexicographer, Marzūquī, ليل is used as opposed to نهار and ليلة as opposed to يوم. ليلة like علامة and ناسبة is expressive of exaggeration, and possesses a wider and more extensive meaning than ليل, as يوم which is its opposite has a wider sense than نهار which is opposite of ليل. The word ليلة has been used as many as eight times in the Qur'ān (2 : 52 ; 2 : 188 ; 44 : 4; twice in 7 : 143 & three times in the verse under comment), and everywhere it has been used in connection with the revelation of the Qur'ān and other kindred subjects. It thus points to the dignity, majesty and greatness of those nights in which the Qur'ān was revealed. In

view of different meanings of قدر given under Important Words and of the significance of the word ليلة the present verse may be interpreted as follows:

1. We have revealed the Qur'ān in the night which We had specifically set apart for the manifestation of Our special powers *i.e.*, We have revealed the Qur'ān at a time about which prophecies were to be found in previous Scriptures.
2. We have revealed it in a night which is equal in worth to all the other nights put together *i.e.*, this one night is equal in worth to the life of the whole of humanity.
3. We have revealed it in a night of dignity, majesty and honour *i.e.*, the Quranic teaching is too dignified to be successfully assailed.
4. We have revealed it in the night of sufficiency *i.e.*, the Qur'ān fully meets all moral and spiritual human needs and requirements so as to render man independent of all other Scriptures.
5. We have revealed it in the Night of Decree or Destiny *i.e.*, the Qur'ān was revealed at a time when man's destiny was decreed, the future pattern of the

3. And what should make thee know what the Night of Destiny is?⁴⁷⁹⁴

4. The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months.⁴⁷⁹⁵

5. Therein descend angels^a and the Spirit by the command of their Lord with Divine decree concerning every matter^b.⁴⁷⁹⁶

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ ۚ

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۚ

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ
مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ۚ

^a16 : 3 ; 40 : 16. ^b44 : 5.

universe was settled, and right principles of guidance for humanity were laid down for all time to come. The time of the appearance of a great Divine Reformer is also called لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ because at that time sin and vice hold widespread sway and the powers of darkness reign supreme. It has also been taken to mean the particular night among the odd nights in the last ten days of Ramādān when the Qur'ān first began to be revealed. Or it may signify the whole period of 23 years of the Holy Prophet's ministry when the Qur'ān gradually was being revealed.

4794. Commentary :

The verse means that the blessings of the Night of Destiny are beyond count or calculation.

4795. Commentary :

ألف (a thousand) being the highest number of count in Arabic signifies a number beyond count, and the verse means, that the Night of Destiny is better than countless number of months *i.e.*, the period of the Holy Prophet is infinitely better and superior to all other periods put together. Or the verse may signify that the sacrifices which the Muslims were required to make at Mecca in the night of their distress and

agony which had taken out of their lives all light and happiness, were infinitely greater than those sacrifices which they made afterwards.

The word شهر also means a learned man. The verse in this sense may signify that the mysteries of spiritual sciences and heavenly knowledge which will be revealed in the Book which is being revealed in the Night of Decree are greater in quantity and superior in quality than the knowledge produced by the concerted and combined efforts of all learned men.

The verse, however, embodies an allusion to the appearance of Divine Reformers among the Muslims when they would stand in need of them. One thousand months roughly make one century and the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that God would continue to raise from among his followers, at the head of every century, a Reformer who would regenerate Islam and give it new life and new vigour (Māja). Thus لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ (Night of Destiny) may signify the period of each one of these Divine Reformers.

4796. Commentary :

الروح here signifies a new spirit, awakening, zeal and determination. The verse purports to say that in the Night of Destiny the angels of

6. *It is all peace till the rising of the dawn.*⁴⁷⁹⁷

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ⑥

God descend to help the Divine Messenger or Reformer to promote and further the cause of Truth and that his followers are inspired with a new life, a new spirit and a new awakening, to spread and propagate the Divine Message.

The expression من كل أمر signifies that the angels of God descend to meet and satisfy every religious need and to remove all obstacles and impediments from the way of the expansion and spread of the new Message.

4797. Commentary :

The word سلام (peace) stands for a complete

sentence meaning, "it is all peace." In the time of a Prophet or Divine Reformer a peculiar kind of mental peace or equanimity descends upon the believers amidst hardships and privations. The heavenly happiness which inspires believers at that time transcends all material and sensuous joys.

The expression مطلع الفجر means, the passing of the night of hardships and the rising of the dawn of predominance and ascendancy of the cause of Truth.

CHAPTER 98

SŪRA AL-BAYYINAH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

Scholars differ about the time of revelation of this *Sūra*. Ibn Marduwaih reports that 'Ā'isha, the talented wife of the Holy Prophet, said that it was revealed at Mecca, while according to Ibn 'Abbās, as reported by the same authority, it was revealed in the early Medinite period. After taking all relevant facts into consideration, the majority of scholars have adhered to the view attributed to 'Āisha.

The preceding several *Sūrās* had dealt with the important subject of revelation of the Qur'ān and its incomparable beauty and excellence. The present *Sūra*, however, deals with the change that the Qur'ān was intended to bring about. At the very outset, it states that the People of the Book and the idolaters would have continued to grope in the dark and to live a life of sin and iniquity if the Qur'ān had not been revealed. It is the Holy Prophet who brought them out of the darkness of doubt and disbelief and led them to the path of right beliefs and righteous deeds.

سُورَةُ الْبَيِّنَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٩٨)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters would not desist from disbelief until there came to them the clear evidence—⁴⁷⁹⁸

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالشُّرَكِيِّينَ مُنْكَفِرِينَ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ②

3. A Messenger from Allah, reciting unto them the pure Scriptures.⁴⁷⁹⁹

رَسُولٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَتْلُو صُحُفًا مُطَهَّرَةً ③

4. Wherein are lasting commandments.⁴⁸⁰⁰

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيمَةٌ ④

^aSee 1: 1. ^b16: 34. ^c3: 165; 62: 3; 87: 19.

4798. Important Words :

منفكين is derived from انفك . They say انفك الشيئ عن الشيئ i.e., the thing became separated from another thing. ما انفك يفعل كذا means, he continued to do so or did not cease to do so or did not desist from doing so (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The Qur'an has divided all disbelievers into two categories—the People of the Book and the idolaters i.e., those who do not believe in any revealed Scripture. The verse purports to say that before the advent of the Holy Prophet those who had received revealed guidance as well as those who were complete strangers to it were all sunk in immorality and iniquity and had held false beliefs and wrong ideals and principles, and that if the Holy Prophet had not come and the Qur'an had not been revealed, they would have continued to flounder in darkness. It is to this universal

moral decline that the Qur'an has referred in the words ظهر الفساد في البر والبحر i.e., corruption had appeared on land and on sea (30: 42).

4799. Commentary :

The expression رسول من الله is case in apposition with the word البينة in the preceding verse. The word مطهرة (pure) signifies that the Qur'an is completely free from all possible flaws, blemishes or defects. It possesses, on the contrary all conceivable beauty and excellence.

4800. Important Words :

قيمة (lasting) is derived from قام . They say قام بالامر i.e., he managed, conducted or superintended the affair. قومه means, he put it right or made it straight. قيم means, true, perfect; superintendent; guardian (Lane, Mufradāt & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The Qur'an is the compendium of all that is good, lasting and imperishable in the teachings

5. And those to whom the Book was given did not become divided" until after clear evidence had come to them.⁴⁸⁰¹

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۖ

6. And they were not commanded but to serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience,^b and being upright, and to observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat. And that is the right religion.⁴⁸⁰²

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ
الدِّينَ ۚ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ۖ

^a42 : 15; 45 : 18.

^b31 : 33; 40 : 15.

of former revealed Scriptures, with a good deal more which those Scriptures lack but which man needed for his moral and spiritual development. All those right ideals and principles and ordinances and commandments which were of permanent utility to man have been incorporated in it. The Qur'an stands, as it were, not only as a guardian over those Books but comprises additional teachings that guard and protect man from moral decline and degeneration and teaches him how to make right use of his God-given faculties.

In the words *صحفا مطهرة* (pure Scriptures) stress is laid on the fact that the Qur'an has steered clear of all those defects and impurities which were found in the former Scriptures. In the expression *دين القيمة* (right religion) the emphasis is on those lasting and unalterable teachings which are its exclusive possession.

4801. Commentary :

The verse means to say that the People of the Book had eagerly awaited the coming of a great Prophet about whom clear prophecies

were found in their Scriptures, but when he appeared in fact, then instead of accepting him they rejected him.

4802. Commentary :

دين (religion) means obedience; mastery; command; plan; righteousness; habit or custom; behaviour or conduct (Lane & Aqrab). The verse may signify:

- (1) They should have rendered full and sincere obedience to Divine commandments.
- (2) When they got mastery or ascendancy, they should have devoted all their power and prestige to obtaining God's pleasure.
- (3) All their plans should have been directed towards the achievement of the one supreme object—pleasure of God.
- (4) Their fear of God and love for Him should have been completely sincere and honest.
- (5) They should have imbibed Divine attributes; and all their friendships

7. Verily, those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters will be in the fire of Hell,^a abiding therein. They are the worst of creatures.^b

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالشُّمَكِينِ
فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ
الْبَرِيَّةِ ④

8. Verily, those who believe and do righteous deeds—they are the best of creatures.^c

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ
خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ ⑤

9. Their reward is with their Lord—Gardens of Eternity,^d through which streams flow; they will abide therein for ever. Allah is well pleased with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord^e.⁴⁸⁰³

جَزَاؤُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ ⑥

^a19 : 69; 21 : 99. ^b8 : 56; 95 : 6. ^c3 : 199. ^d9 : 72 ; 13 : 24 ; 16 : 32 ; 35 : 34.
^e36 : 12; 55 : 47 ; 67 : 13.

and enmities should have been for the sake of God.

reached when man's will becomes completely identified with the Will of God.

4803. **Commentary :**

The highest stage of spiritual development is

CHAPTER 99

SŪRA ZILZĀL

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks:

Scholars differ about the time of revelation of this *Sūra*. The majority, including Mujāhid, 'Aṭā' and Ibn 'Abbās, are of the view that it was revealed at Mecca, while others think that it was revealed at Medina. But, taking into consideration all the relevant facts the latter view does not appear to be sound, since, in subject-matter, the *Sūra* resembles its predecessor which is a Meccan *Sūra*. Whereas in the preceding *Sūra* mention was made of the great moral revolution that was brought about by the Holy Prophet, in the *Sūra* under comment we are told that a similar change will take place at a later date, in the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, when all human institutions will be shaken to their foundations, and new discoveries and inventions in the domain of science and knowledge will change the entire shape of things, and the ideals and ideas of men will be given a new orientation.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the earth is shaken with her violent shaking,⁴⁸⁰⁴

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُلْزَالَهَا ②

3. And the earth throws up her burdens,⁴⁸⁰⁵

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

4804. Important Words :

زُلْزِلَتْ (is shaken). زَلَزَلَ اللَّهُ الْأَرْضَ means, God made the earth to quake violently, or put the earth into a state of convulsion or violent motion. زَلَزَلَ فَلَانًا means, he frightened such a one and terrified him. زَلَزَلَ الْأَبْلَ means, he drove the camels with violence or vehemence. زَلْزَلَةٌ means an earthquake, convulsion, commotion or violent agitation; a great calamity (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The expression زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُلْزَالَهَا means that the whole earth will experience all manner of internal as well as external commotion and upheavals. In our time not only has the earth been constantly shaken by most destructive earthquakes, wars and other calamities and catastrophes at frequent intervals, but also its dwellers have been subjected to violent and virulent agitation in every walk of life. Man has experienced catastrophic changes never witnessed by him before.

4805. Important Words :

أَثْقَالَهَا (her burdens) is the plural of ثَقْلٌ

which is inf. noun from ثَقُلَ (thaqula) which means, it was or became heavy, weighty or ponderous, or it became preponderant ideally; it was or became oppressive or grievous. ثَقْلٌ (thiqun) means, luggage of a traveller; household goods; anything held in high estimate or anything which is in much demand and is preserved: treasure or buried treasure; burden (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse may have one of the following interpretations:

1. The bowels of the earth will be ripped open and it will throw up its treasures of mineral wealth.
2. There will be a vast release and upsurge of knowledge of all kinds, relating to physical as well as spiritual sciences, especially in the sciences of geology and archaeology.
3. People will throw off the yoke of their rulers and religious leaders and will revolt against oppression, throwing the yoke of subjection off their shoulders.

4. And man says, 'What is the matter with her?'⁴⁸⁰⁶

5. That day will she tell her news,⁴⁸⁰⁷

6. For thy Lord will have revealed about her.⁴⁸⁰⁸

7. On that day will men come forth in scattered groups that they may be shown *the results of* their works.⁴⁸⁰⁹

8. "Then whoso does an atom's weight of good will see it,

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۚ

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۚ

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ۚ

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّرَوْاٰعِهِمْ ۚ

مَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۚ

^a4 : 124-125; 17 : 8; 28 : 85; 41 : 47.

4806. Commentary :

The changes will be so many and so far-reaching and the discoveries made so great that one will exclaim in wonder and bewilderment: "What is the matter with the earth !"

4807. Commentary :

All prophecies concerning the present age will be fulfilled and all that had hitherto remained obscure will become manifest. The verse may also mean that the science of geology will make great strides. When asked about the meaning of the verse, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that every action done in secret will come to light (Tirmidhī).

4808. Commentary :

At about 65 places in the Qur'ān, excluding the present verse, wherever the word وحي has been used, it is followed by the preposition الى . In the verse under comment, however, it is followed by the particle ل which being synonymous with في means, "concerning," and the verse means, the Lord has sent down the

revelation concerning her, the recipient of the revelation—the Holy Prophet—being left unmentioned. The word أوحى also means, he commanded. In this sense of the word, the verse would mean that the earth will throw out its treasures because it is commanded by God to do so.

4809. Commentary :

The verse means that in the time of the Promised Messiah, in order to protect and safeguard their political, social and economic interests, people will form themselves into parties, companies and groups. There will be political parties and parties formed on economic basis; and powerful guilds, cartels and syndicates will also come into existence.

The words "that they may be shown the results of their works" signify that individuals will pool their resources, and collective effort will take the place of individual effort in order that they might make their weight felt and their labours might lead to some result.

9. "And whoso does an atom's weight of evil will *also* see it.⁴⁸¹⁰

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ①

99 : 8.

4810. Commentary :

The principle that no action of man, good or bad, is wasted and must produce some result, has been explained variously in the Qur'ān.

These two verses contain at once a message of solace and comfort for the righteous, and a warning for the evil-doers, that they shall reap the consequences of their actions.

CHAPTER 100

SŪRA AL-‘ĀDIYĀT

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction:

A large majority of eminent Muslim scholars, including Jābir, ‘Ikrama, and ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd, one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet and a great authority on Quranic chronology, are of the view that the *Sūra* was revealed very early at Mecca. One or two writers who disagree with this view, therefore, do not count. The *Sūra* takes its place in point of the time next to the preceding *Sūra*.

In some of the foregoing *Sūrās* the conditions both in the time of the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah as, also the great transformation that was to be brought about by them were simultaneously mentioned, and *Sūra Zilzāl* had dealt with the great advances in science and knowledge, especially in the science of geology, and with the vast changes that were to take place in the political, social and economic spheres. The present *Sūra*, deals with the zeal and enthusiasm of the Companions of the Holy Prophet, with their great sacrifices and the battles they fought against unequal odds, in the way of God. The *Sūra* may also be taken to refer to the mode of fighting in the present age. Some mystics, however, take the *Sūra*, to refer to the constant war that the righteous believers have to wage against their passions and evil propensities, and to the heavenly light they receive as the result of the successful outcome of that fight.

سُورَةُ الْعَادِيَّاتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the snorting chargers of the warriors,⁴⁸¹¹

وَالْعِدَّتِ ضَبَّاحٌ ②

3. Striking sparks of fire with their hoofs.⁴⁸¹²

فَالْمُورِيَّتِ قَدْ حَا ③

4811. Important Words :

العاديّات (the chargers) is the plural of عادية which is fem. act. part. from عدا which means, he ran vehemently. عدا عليه means, he attacked or assaulted him. عاديّات means, companies of warriors; horses or chargers of the warriors (Lane & Aqrab).

ضَبَّاحٌ (snorting) is derived from ضَبَحَ which means, he or it uttered a sound or cry. They say ضَبَحَتِ الْخَيْلُ فِي الْعَدُوِّ i.e., the horses breathed pantingly or hard with a sound from the chest when running fast, or breathed hard or laboriously when running a race and fatigued; they snorted. ضَبْحٌ (ḡabḡhun) is a kind of race of the animals, particularly of the horses; the sound coming out of the chest of a horse when it runs fast and breathes laboriously: running of the horse with long strides. (Lane & Mufradāt).

Commentary :

How dear to God must be those fighters who wage relentless war against the forces of evil that He has sworn by them or even by their horses. The verse speaks volumes for the zeal and enthusiasm of the Companions of the Holy Prophet to fight and give up their lives in the way of God. It says that they march

to the field of battle with extreme delight and zeal to score a victory or be killed in the way of Allah and thus obtain His pleasure, which is their most coveted goal in life. The verse also refers admiringly to the swiftness of movement of their chargers and the suddenness of their assault.

The verse was revealed in Mecca at a time when Muslims had no horses. In the Battle of Badr, there were only two horses with the Muslim army, one belonging to Miqdād and the other to Zubair. The verse, in fact, constituted a prophecy that soon the Muslims will have horses. It also was a command to them to have cavalry along with infantry.

4812. Important Words :

الموريّات (striking) is fem. act. part. from أَوْرَى. They say أَوْرَى الزُّنْدَ i.e., he produced fire from the piece of wood called زُنْدُ النَّارِ. means, he struck or produced fire with a flint (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The chargers of Muslim warriors run so fast that they produce sparks of fire when they strike their hoofs against the ground. The allusion in the verse is to the eagerness and zeal of the Muslim warriors to fight in the way of God.

4. And making raids at dawn,⁴⁸¹³

فَالْمُغِيرَاتِ صُبْحًا

5. And raising clouds of dust thereby,⁴⁸¹⁴

فَأَثَرُنَ بِهِ نَقْعًا

6. And penetrating thereby into the centre of *the enemy* forces,⁴⁸¹⁵

فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا

7. Surely, man is ungrateful to his Lord,⁴⁸¹⁶

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ

4813. Important Words :

المغيرات (making raids) is the plural of مغيرة which is fem. act. part. from أغار which is the transitive form of غار. They say غارني الأمر i.e., he remained deeply engaged into the affair. أغار means, he went far into the country. أغار الفرس means, the horse ran vehemently and was quick in sudden attack. أغار على العدو means, he made a sudden raid upon the enemy. خيل مغيرة means, horses making a sudden attack upon the enemy. مغيرات means, companies that go far into the country; that make a swift and sudden attack upon the enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse mentions one more characteristic of the brave Muslim warriors. They do not take undue advantage of the neglect and unwariness of the enemy by attacking them at night. They attack them in the full glare of the dawn. The verse shows that Muslims are brave and clean fighters .

4814. Important Words :

أثرن (raise) is transitive verb from أثار. They say أثار الغبار means, the dust became stirred up and spread upon the horizon. أثار الأرض means, he tilled the ground. أثار الفتنة means, he stirred up the mischief (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The assault of the Muslim forces is so fierce

and overwhelming that the whole horizon becomes dark with the dust raised by the quick steps of their horses.

4815. Commentary :

Muslim warriors do not attack single individuals or weak helpless women, children or old men, but they attack in a body the whole enemy-force and penetrate far into the heart of their ranks.

The reference in these verses (2-6) may also be to those God-intoxicated spiritual wayfarers who constantly and relentlessly are engaged in fighting the forces of evil and in making strenuous efforts to get nearness to God and by their noble efforts cause a heavenly light to burn in them; and when by the light of Divine realization they acquire the capability to detect their own shortcomings and those of others, they make a vehement attack on them. Their next stage in this spiritual journey is reached when they pour out the agony of their hearts before their Creator and invoke His Grace and Mercy by prayer and devotional cries. These are the persons who succeed in obtaining their great object.

4816. Important Words :

كنود (ungrateful) is derived from كند. They say كند النعمة i.e., he disacknowledged a benefit; he was ungrateful. كند الشيء means, he cut the thing. كنود means, ungrateful man

8. And surely, he bears witness to it *by his conduct* that;⁴⁸¹⁷

9. And surely, in his love of wealth he is violent.^a

10. Does not such a one know that when those in the graves are raised^b,⁴⁸¹⁸

11. And that which is *hidden* in the breasts is brought forth.⁴⁸¹⁹

12. Surely, their Lord will, on that day, be fully Aware of them.⁴⁸²⁰

وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ۝

وَأَنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ۝

أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ۝

وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ۝

إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌ ۝

^a89 : 21.

^b82 : 5.

or woman; an unbeliever; a blamer of his Lord who remembers misfortunes and forgets favours; rebellious; niggardly; avaricious; who eats alone and beats his slaves. أرض كنود means, land that produces nothing (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to the arrogant, base and miserly disbeliever who is also a coward. He is cruel towards the weak and does not feed the poor.

4817. Commentary :

Such a one indulges not only in the evils mentioned in the preceding verse but also takes pride in doing so.

4818. Commentary :

The verse means that there is no life left in the disbelievers. They seem to be lying dead in their graves—their houses. But soon they will rise in opposition to Islam and will

march many miles to attack the Holy Prophet in Medina.

4819. Important Words :

حصل (brought forth) is transitive from حصل (haṣala), which means, it became apparent; it came into existence; it became realized; it came to pass. حصل (haṣala) means, he produced, retracted or fetched out; he made a thing apparent; he prepared; he separated, discriminated or distinguished; he perceived a thing; he obtained or attained it; he acquired it; he collected (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The evil designs of the enemies of Islam will come to light.

4820. Commentary :

God is well aware of their evil designs and He will punish them for their evil actions.

CHAPTER 101

SŪRA AL-QĀRI'AH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

This *Sūra* was revealed early at Mecca. All Commentators agree on this point. Noldeke and Muir, too, subscribe to this view.

The *Sūra* like *Sūra Zilzāl* primarily gives a brief but lucid description of the tremendous convulsions and catastrophic upheavals that will shake the foundations of the world in the time of the Promised Messiah, while the immediately preceding *Sūra* had dealt with the great fight that the Companions of the Holy Prophet put up against the forces of darkness. The *Sūra* may equally apply to the Day of Judgment, than which there could be no greater calamity.



1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. ^bThe Great Calamity! ^{4820-A}

الْقَارِعَةُ ②

3. What is the Great Calamity? ⁴⁸²¹

مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ③

4. And what should make thee know what the Great Calamity is? ⁴⁸²²

وَمَا أَذْرَكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ④

5. The day when mankind will be like scattered moths, ⁴⁸²³

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ⑤

6. And the mountains will be like carded wool.

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعُفُوشِ ⑥

^a See 1 : 1. ^b 13 : 32.

4820-A. Important Words :

القارعة (the Great Calamity) is derived from قَرَعَ. They say قَرَعَ الباب *i.e.*, he knocked at the door. قَرَعَهُ أَمْرٌ means, the affair came on him all of a sudden. قارعة means, a great and sudden calamity; the Day of Resurrection; an army marching forth and striking the enemy suddenly (Aqrab & Tāj). See also 13 : 32

Commentary :

The particle ال particularizes قارعة (calamity) and imparts to it a special significance. القارعة thus means, a great calamity; the Promised Calamity or the Day of Judgment.

4821. Commentary :

Whereas the particle ال added to قارعة has particularized the calamity and heightened its dreadfulness, the addition of the particle ما (what) makes it still more severe and destructive.

4822. Commentary :

The verse signifies that the calamity would be so catastrophic that it is impossible to conceive of its dreadfulness, much less to describe it in words. See also 69 : 2-5 where an identical expression to produce an analogous effect has been used. القارعة besides a great calamity, signifies punishment that suddenly comes upon disbelievers.

4823. Commentary :

Because it is beyond human mind to conceive of the dreadfulness of the calamity, a few of its horrible effects have been pointed out. This and the next verse give some idea of the confusion and distress it will cause.

The terrific and cataclysmic happening will scatter the people like flakes of carded wool, not finding refuge anywhere.

7. Then, as for him whose scales are heavy^a,⁴⁸²⁴

فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۖ

8. He will have a pleasant life.

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ۝

9. But as for him whose scales are light,^b

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۖ

10. Hell will be his nursing mother.⁴⁸²⁵

فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ ۝

11. And what should make thee know what that is?

وَمَا أَذْرَكَ مَا هِيَ ۝

12. It is a ^cblazing Fire.⁴⁸²⁶

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ۝

a7 : 9; 23 : 103. b7 : 10; 23 : 104. c87 : 13; 88 : 5.

4824. Commentary :

When used in relation to an individual موازين means, his works, but when used in relation to a nation, it means, its material means and resources; and according to the present-day terminology of war, 'tonnage' seems to be an exact rendering of the word. In the latter sense of the word the verse would mean that a nation whose material resources or tonnage of steamships or aeroplanes is heavy will predominate over its adversaries and this fact will add to its prestige and power and consequently to its happiness.

4825. Commentary :

أُم primarily meaning, 'mother' has a variety of secondary significations such as source, origin; support; an abode, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

The verse signifies that the connection of the sinful people with Hell will be like that of a

baby with its mother. Just as the embryo goes through various stages of development in the womb till it is born as a full-fledged human being, so will the guilty people pass through different stages of spiritual torture, till their souls are completely cleansed of the taint of sin and they will thus receive a new birth. Thus the punishments of Hell are intended to make the wicked repent of their sins and so reform themselves. According to Islamic concept Hell is a penitentiary.

4726. Commentary :

The expression, "It is a burning fire" signifies that the fire of Hell will be so hot as to defy description. The heat released by an atom bomb may perhaps give some idea, albeit an entirely incomplete one, of the heat of the Hell.

CHAPTER 102

SŪRA AL-TAKĀTHUR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

By common consent this is one of the earliest *Sūrās* revealed at Mecca. Its subject-matter also shows that it belongs to that period.

In the preceding *Sūra* mention was made of the communities of disbelievers whom the Holy Prophet was to reform in his own time, in times following his death, and later, particularly, in the time of his Second Coming, in the person of the Promised Messiah. In the two Chapters that immediately precede the present *Sūra* special mention was made of the punishment that was to overtake disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's own time and in the subsequent long career of Islam including the Age of his Second Advent. The *Sūra* under comment deals with the factors which engender in man an inclination to, or a liking for, disbelief and which divert his attention away from God and Truth.

The *Sūra* deals with a very common and deadly spiritual disease, *viz.*, vying with one another in amassing worldly goods and taking pride in their abundance. The Holy Prophet often used to recite the *Surā* ; he is reported to have said that the *Sūra* was equal in weight and worth to a thousand verses (Bayān, Baihaquī & Dailamī), thus stressing its great importance.

سُورَةُ التَّكْوِيْنِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٢)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Mutual rivalry in seeking *worldly* increase, ^bdiverts you from God.⁴⁸²⁷

الْهَيْكُمُ التَّكْوِيْنُ ②

3. Till you reach the graves.⁴⁸²⁸

حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْبَقَايِرُ ③

4. Nay! you will soon come to know *the truth*.

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b24 : 38; 48 : 12; 62 : 10.

4827. Important Words :

التَّكْوِيْنُ (mutual rivalry in worldly increase) is derived from كَثُرَ i.e., it was or became much, abundant, copious, great in number; it multiplied; it accumulated. تَكَاثَرُوا means, they contended, one with another, for superiority in numbers. التَّكَاثُرُ means, contending with one another for superiority in numbers or property. children and men. تَكَاثَرَتْ أَمْوَالُهُ means, his riches multiplied by degrees (Lane).

Commentary :

Acquisitiveness and man's inordinate desire to outstrip others in wealth, position and prestige lies at the root of all human troubles and of neglect of higher values of life. It is man's great misfortune that his passion for acquiring worldly things knows no limit and leaves him no time to think of God or the Hereafter. He remains entirely engrossed in these things till death comes upon him.

Against general practice, the verb الْهَيْكُمُ has not been followed by the preposition عَنْ in this

verse. This enlarges the meaning of the verb, covering, as it does, all the things that are calculated to divert man's attention from God and not from any particular thing or object.

4828. Commentary :

Man remains engrossed in acquiring worldly goods till death comes upon him and then he finds that he had wasted all his precious life. The verse also signifies that competition for superiority in wealth, position and numbers has led to the undoing of individuals and even of nations. Moral rather than physical death is meant here, because physical death comes uninvited, but man himself brings about his moral death. So it is not unqualified rivalry and vying with one another that is condemned here. On the contrary, believers have been exhorted in the Qur'an to endeavour to outstrip one another in doing good (2 : 149 & 35 : 32). It is the blind craze for worldly things, to the detriment of higher values, to which exception has been taken in this verse.

5. Nay again! you will soon come to know.⁴⁸²⁹

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

6. Nay! if you only knew with certain knowledge,

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ٦

7. You will surely see Hell in this very life.

لَتَرَوْنَ الْجَحِيمَ ٧

8. Aye, you will surely see it with the eye of certainty *Hereafter*.⁴⁸³⁰

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوْهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ٨

9. Then, on that day you shall be questioned about the favours *bestowed upon you*.

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ٩

4829. Commentary :

Repetition of the verse is intended to add emphasis to and render more effective the warning contained in the *Surā*. Or the *Surā* may refer to the Nemesis that will come in the wake of blind engrossment in the acquisition of worldly things in this life and in the Hereafter.

4830. Commentary :

The verse administers a severe rebuke to disbelievers. It seems to say to them: "Why can't you understand the simple thing, that the wages of sin is death and that no spiritual life is left in you. Had you used common sense and what little amount of knowledge you possess, you would have seen a veritable Hell yawning before your eyes in this very life *i.e.*, you would have realized that your engrossment in the pursuit of pomp, circumstance and the material advantages of this temporary existence will cause your total ruin. But you give no thought to these stark realities of life. You do not believe that such a thing will ever happen, but the time is fast approaching when you will see Divine punishment overtaking you in the form of diverse calamities."

It may be stated here that there are three stages of certainty, *viz.*, علم اليقين *i.e.*, "certainty by inference, عين اليقين *i.e.*, "certainty by sight" and حق اليقين *i.e.*, "certainty by realization." In the first stage a thing itself is not visible but from its visible effects a man can conclude that it exists. In the second stage not only the effects of a thing but the thing itself is visible, though its nature is not completely comprehended. In the third stage which is the stage of perfect realization or personal experience a man both through observation of the effects of a thing on others and through realization of its effect on himself, can have as complete an understanding of the nature of a thing as it is possible for him to have. These are also the stages of human knowledge with regard to Hell. A man can, by inference, attain certainty about the existence of Hell in this very life but it is after death that he will see it with his own eyes, though it is on the Day of Resurrection that a sinful man will have full realization of it by personally experiencing it.

4831. Commentary :

When disbelievers will be brought face to face to Hell, they will be told that God had bestowed upon them all kinds of favours, especially His greatest favour—the Holy Prophet—but they rejected and opposed him.

CHAPTER 103

SŪRA AL-‘AṢR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

By general agreement this *Sūra* was revealed in the early years of the Call. Western Orientalists, besides Muslim Commentators of the Qur’ān, assign it to the early Meccan period.

The preceding *Sūra* had dealt with man’s passion for amassing wealth and worldly goods and with its evil consequences. In the present *Sūra* we are told that a purposeless life having no ideals to pursue goes to waste; and that material progress and prosperity cannot save a people if they do not possess faith and do not lead clean and pure lives. This is the unfailing testimony of time. Drunk with great material resources and with power, prestige and prosperity, disbelievers, especially the Christian nations of today, labour under the misconception that these things would never see decline or diminution. On the other hand, Muslims, for their part, seem to have despaired of their future. The *Sūra* relates particularly to the present time. It may, however, be taken also to relate to the Holy Prophet’s own time since by *العصر* is meant, his time.

سُورَةُ الْعَصْرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٣)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. By the Time,⁴⁸³²

وَالْعَصْرِ ②

3. Surely, man is in a state of loss^{b, 4833}

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ ③

4. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and "exhort one another to *accept* truth, and exhort one another to be steadfast.⁴⁸³⁴

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا ④

بِإِلْحِقِهِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ⑤

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b10 : 46; 65 : 10.

^c90 : 18.

4832. Important Words :

العصر (the Time) is inf. noun. from عصر . They say عصره i.e., he aided, succoured or assisted him; he saved and preserved him; he gave a gift and did some favour to him. عصر means; time or history or succession of ages; a period of time (syn. دهر); a day as opposed to night; a night as opposed to day; the afternoon; or evening. العصران means, the night and the day; the morning and the evening (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See a collective note on the whole *Sūra* under v : 4.

4833. Important Words :

خسر (in a state of loss) khasira) means, he suffered a loss; he lost his way; he was ruined (Lane).

Commentary :

الانسان (man) here signifies man as mentioned

in 17 : 12; 18 : 55; 36 : 78; 70 : 20, viz., the hasty, the contentious, the quarrelling and the impatient man.

4834. Important Words :

صبر (to be steadfast) is inf. noun from صبر (sabara) which means, he was or became patient or enduring; he endured trial or affliction with dignity or he was contented in affliction or trial without complaining; he was steadfast amid trials; he made no difference between a state of ease and comfort and a state of affliction, preserving calmness of mind in both states. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

It is History's infallible testimony that those individuals or nations who do not make full use of their God-given powers and faculties and of the opportunities that come to them in this life, and who defy the eternal natural laws which determine the destiny of man inevitably come to grief. It is such individuals and nations.

who are the losers in the race against Time and it is to these that the word *الإنسان* in the *Sūra* refers. Divine laws cannot be defied with impunity and the Qur'an repeatedly draws pointed attention to the sad fate of those people who have the audacity to do so, in the words "Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those before them?" (40 : 22).

Firm faith in eternal truths and the practical carrying out of them in our dealings in everyday life constitutes a sure guarantee for a happy, contented, prosperous and progressive life; and this is the meaning of the words "such as have faith and do righteous deeds." Man cannot escape "loss" which is the purpose or object of his life without possessing true and real faith in Divinely-revealed truths and adjusting his conduct in harmony with them. Human reason without the assistance of revealed guidance cannot be a safe guide. It is Divine guidance received through God's great Messengers that can lead safely to the desired goal. But a person, however, good and

great, cannot bring about any real and permanent reformation single-handed unless the whole environment is changed, because man is strongly influenced by his environment. In this *Sūra* and at several other places in the Qur'an, believers have been enjoined not only to adopt right and good principles and ideals themselves but to preach them to others and thus help in the creation of a healthy atmosphere around them. They are further enjoined not to be discouraged or dismayed by opposition and persecution they might have to face in the discharge of their very difficult task but to bear it with patience and fortitude. Thus the *Sūra*, in one brief verse, has laid down the golden rules by observing which one can lead a successful and happy life. Taking the word *العصر* to mean the time of the Holy Prophet (Bukhārī) or taking it as applying to the Latter Days, the *Sūra* emphatically declares that the disbelieving nations, with all their material resources and great power and prestige will suffer loss; only the righteous believers will achieve the noble goal they desire and pursue.

CHAPTER 104

SŪRA AL-HUMAZAH

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

This *Sūra*, like the preceding one, was revealed very early at Mecca; it was in fact among the earliest *Sūrās* to be revealed. There is complete unanimity of opinion among the Commentators of the Qur'ān on this point, and Western Orientalists also agree with this view.

In *Sūra* Al-Takāthur a warning was held out that unhealthy competition in amassing wealth and taking pride in it, is calculated to draw man's attention from God and from true values of life, and in *Sūra* Al-'Asr it was stated that only by noble ideals and righteous behaviour can man save himself from a life of "loss." In this *Sūra* mention is made of the dreadful end of those wicked disbelievers who, instead of spending their hoarded wealth in promoting good causes, indulge in finding fault with, and slandering good and righteous believers. Hence the title "Al-Humazah."

سُورَةُ الْهُمَزَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٣)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."⁴⁸³⁵

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. "Woe to every backbiter, slanderer,"⁴⁸³⁶

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ②

3. Who amasses wealth and counts it over and over.^e

الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ③

^aSee 1 : 1 ^b49:12; 68:12. ^c9 : 34; 89 : 21.

4835. Important Words :

همزة (back-biter is derived from همز) which means he goaded or spurred him, he beat him ; he broke it; he drove him ; he reproached him or found fault with him; he spoke ill of him behind his back. They say همزته همزة اليد الحاجة i.e., want drove him to it ; همزة means, one who finds fault with others behind their backs much or habitually; one who back-bites others; who defames men (Lane & Aqrab).

لمزة (slanderer) possesses all the meanings of همزة with this difference that whereas همزة means, one who finds fault with people behind their backs, لمزة means, who finds fault with them behind their backs or before their faces. لمزه also means, he made a sign to him with the eye or the head and the lip with low speech (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

The *Sūra* is of general application but it has been applied in particular to those evil-minded opponents of the Holy Prophet, who not being satisfied with persecuting him defamed him, and spread all sorts of lies and slanders about him. As against two

basic good qualities viz., goodness and patience, mentioned in the preceding *Sūra*, two evil qualities which cut at the root of all social peace and harmony have been mentioned in this *Sūra*. Backbiting and slander-mongering are the two main evils from which the so-called civilized society badly suffers to-day.

4836. Important Words :

عدد (counts it over and over) is syn. with عدد ('adada) and also has an intensive signification. عدده means, he reckoned it time after time; he made it numerous; he made it a provision against the casualties of time. عددت الميت means, I enumerated the good qualities of the dead person (Lane & Aqrab).

مالا (wealth) means, great wealth; small wealth; worthless wealth which is great in the eyes of him who amasses it but small and worthless in the sight of God.

Commentary :

The verse constitutes a sad commentary on man's passion for worldly riches. Worship of Mammon is the bane of the materialistic civilization of the day.

4. He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal.⁴⁸³⁷
5. Nay! he shall surely be cast into the crushing torment.⁴⁸³⁸
6. And what should make thee know what the crushing torment is?
7. *It is* Allah's kindled fire,
8. Which rises over the hearts.⁴⁸³⁹
9. It will be closed in on them^a.⁴⁸⁴⁰

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ ۖ
 كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۖ
 وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۖ
 نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُبْقَدَةُ ۖ
 الَّتِي تَطْلُعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ۖ
 إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ۖ

^a90 : 21.

4837. Commentary :

The verse signifies that the ill-fated miser goes on earning wealth by using all means and amasses and hoards it, taking pride in it and refraining from spending it in good causes, thinking that this will immortalize him, will rescue his name from oblivion and will render his prosperity abiding. He labours under a serious misconception. His hoarded wealth will prove his undoing and will be a constant source of heart-burning for him.

4838. Important Words :

الحطمة (crushing punishment) is derived from حطم . They say حطمته السن *i.e.*, old age broke him. حطمت الدابة (*haṭīma*) means, the beast became aged and emaciated and weak and broken with age. حطمة means, a vehement fire

that breaks into pieces everything that is cast into it; it is also a name for Hell or Hell-fire; a man who eats much *i.e.*, breaks everything in eating; an insatiable man (Lane & Aqrab).

4839. Commentary :

There could be no greater humiliation or agony for a person than that he should see that the cause against which he had fought tooth and nail and which he had tried with might and main to crush, is progressing and prospering before his very eyes. It is this sense of burning and anguish of the heart which the leaders of the Quraish felt when they saw the tender plant of Islam growing into a big tree.

4840. Commentary :

If fire is enclosed on all sides ; its effects become more intense.

10. In extended columns.⁴⁸⁴¹

فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ ۝

4841. Commentary :

The verse may mean : (1) Disbelievers will be bound down to tall columns when the fire will burn them *i.e.* they will be quite helpless and will find no escape or refuge from Divine punishment. (2) They will burn in a furnace of which

the columns will be very tall. This again is a metaphor pointing to the severity of the punishment of Hell. The tall columns may also signify evil customs and usages of disbelievers. These bad customs and traditions will take the form of tall columns in the next life.

CHAPTER 105

SŪRA AL-FĪL

(*Revealed before Hijra*)

Title & Date of Revelation

As its subject-matter shows the *Sūra* is among the earliest *Sūrās* revealed at Mecca. The title of the *Sūra* is taken from the expression اصحاب الفيل (Fellows of the Elephant), occurring in the first verse, Abraha's army being so called because of one or more elephants with them. The *Sūra* refers to the invasion of Mecca by Abraha Ashram, the viceroy in Yemen of the Christian King of Abyssinia, who came with the object of destroying the Ka'ba.

Summary of Subject-Matter

Dhū Niwās, the Jewish Himyar ruler of Yemen had put to death in cold blood twenty thousand Christians. The Kaiser of Rome had ordered the Negus, King of Abyssinia, which then formed part of the Roman Empire, to avenge this cruel act of Dhū Niwās. The Negus sent Abraha to Yemen. He defeated the Himyar ruler and Yemen became part of the Abyssinian dominion and Abraha was appointed its viceroy. In order to curry favour with the Negus and to break the unity of the Arabs or, as tradition goes, to stem the apprehended tide of Arab nationalism under a great Prophet whose appearance was eagerly awaited and was expected to take place very soon, and in order also to divert the attention of the Arabs from the Ka'ba, and to preach and disseminate Christianity in Arabia, Abraha built a church at Ṣanā', the capital of Yemen. When, however, he failed to cajole or intimidate the Arabs into accepting the church at Ṣanā' in place of the Ka'ba as their central place of worship he was stung with rage, and being intoxicated with his great military power he marched on Mecca with an army of 20,000 strong in order to raze the Ka'ba to the ground. Arriving at a place, a few miles from Mecca, he sent for the leaders of the Quraish in order to negotiate with them about the fate of the Ka'ba. The Quraish deputation, led by the venerable 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, grandfather of the Holy Prophet, met Abraha who treated 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib with great honour. But to Abraha's great surprise, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, instead of beseeching that the Ka'ba be spared, only requested that his two hundred camels which Abraha's men had seized be restored. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib on being told by Abraha that he had not expected such a paltry request from him, poured out the anguish of his heart and expressed his firm faith in the invulnerability of the Ka'ba in the words : انى انا رب الابل و ان للبيت ربا يمنعه : i.e., I am the master of the camels and the Ka'ba has a Master who will protect it" (Al-Kāmil, vol. 1). The negotiations, however, broke down and finding that they were too weak to offer effective resistance to Abraha, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib advised his compatriots to repair to the surrounding hills. Before leaving the city,

'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, holding the skirts of the Ka'ba, prayed in the following words full of extreme pathos:

لا هم ان المرء يمنع رحله فامنع حلالك
لا يغلبن صليهم ومحالهم غدوا محالك

i.e., just as a man protects his house and property from plunder, so do Thou O Lord, defend Thine own House and suffer not the Cross to triumph over the Ka'ba ("Tārīkh Al-Kāmil," by Ibn Athīr, vol. 1, p. 156 & Muir). Abraha's army had hardly moved when the Divine scourge overtook them. "A pestilential distemper," says Muir, "had shown itself in the camp of Abraha. It broke out with deadly pustules and blains and was probably an aggravated form of smallpox. In confusion and dismay the army commenced retreat. Abandoned by their guides, they perished among the valleys, and a flood swept multitudes into the sea. Scarcely any recovered who had once been smitten by it and Abraha himself, a mass of malignant and putrid sores, died miserably on his return to Ṣanā'." It is to this incident particularly that the *Sūra* refers. The fact that the disease which destroyed Abraha's army was smallpox in a virulently epidemic form is supported by the great historian Ibn Ishāq. He quotes 'Ā'isha as saying that she saw two blind beggars in Mecca and on enquiring who they were, she was told that they were the drivers of Abraha's elephant. (Durr Manthūr).

سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٥)

1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the People of the Elephant? ⁴⁸⁴²

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ②

3. Did He not cause their "plan to miscarry"? ⁴⁸⁴³

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ③

4. And He sent against them swarms of birds. ⁴⁸⁴⁴

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ④

^{a27} : 51-52.

4842. Commentary :

This verse refers to Abraha, who marched on Mecca with a large army in 570 A.D., the year of the Holy Prophet's birth, in order to destroy the Ka'ba. The Holy Prophet's birth taking place in the year of Abraha's attack on the Ka'ba and the utter destruction of his army implied a Divine hint that because the great Prophet for whose sake the Ka'ba had been built and who was to preach the last Heavenly Message from there was about to be born, it militated against God's eternal plan that it should suffer destruction at the hands of an arch-infidel. Abraha had a number of elephants with him. They were destroyed by a plague or epidemic, of the nature of smallpox, and their rotting bodies were eaten up by swarms of birds. For a detailed account of this incident see Introduction.

The expression كيف فعل refers more to the dreadfulness of the scourge which destroyed Abraha's army than to the manner of their destruction.

4843. Commentary :

How Abraha was foiled in his design is writ large on the pages of history.

4844. Important Words :

أَبَابِيل (swarms). The word is said to have no singular. According to some its singular is أَبُول which means, a separate or distinct portion of a number of birds or horses or camels following one another أَبَابِيل signifies, according to some, a company in a state of dispersion, or dispersed companies following one another, or distinct or separate companies like camels. They say جاءتك أَبَابِيل i.e., thy camels came in distinct or separate companies. طَيْر أَبَابِيل means, birds in separate flocks or bevvies, or birds in companies from this or that quarter, or following one another, flock after flock (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

See Introduction.

5. Which ate their carrion, striking them against stones of clay.⁴⁸⁴⁵

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ۖ

6. And thus made them like broken straw, eaten up.

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ۚ

4845. Important Words :

ب (against). Among a variety of meanings, this particle is syn. with على meaning, over, upon, at, or against. An Arab poet says :

أرب يبول الثعلبان برأسه
لقد هان من بالت عليه الثعالب

i.e., how can he be رب (Lord) upon whose head jackals make water and how base he is (Al-Yawāqit wa'l Jawāhir, vol. 1).

In the Qur'ān we have منهم من أن تأمنه بدینار i.e., "of them is he that if thou give him charge over a dinar (3 : 76)."

Commentary :

Swarms of birds feasted themselves upon dead bodies of the invaders, striking the severed pieces against stones, as birds generally do when eating the small and severed pieces of the dead body of an animal.

CHAPTER 106

SŪRA AL-QURAISH

(Revealed before Hijra)

This *Sūra*, like its predecessor, was revealed at Mecca in the early years of the Call. Though an independent *Sūra*, complete in all respects, its subject-matter is so closely related to *Sūra* Al-Fīl that it has been wrongly regarded by some Commentators as a part of that *Sūra*.

In *Sūra* Al-Fīl a brief but graphic and forceful description was given of the utter annihilation of Abraha's army (who had come to destroy the Ka'ba) by a heavenly scourge which took the form of a virulent variety of smallpox. In the present *Sūra* God reminds the Quraish that it behoved them to worship "the Lord of this House"—the "House" to serve which they were granted security from fear and hunger. In the preceding *Sūra* mention was made of an enemy of the Ka'ba and of the Divine punishment that overtook him for his audacity to launch an attack on it. In the present *Sūra* it is stated how in the utterly bleak and arid valley of Mecca God provided the custodians of His House with every kind of food and made them secure against fear or danger.

سُورَةُ الْقُرَيْشِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٦)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. For the attachment of the Quraish—⁴⁸⁴⁶

لَا يَلْفُ قُرَيْشٌ ②

3. *His* making them attached to *their* journey in winter and summer—⁴⁸⁴⁷

إِنْفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

4846. Important Words :

ل is a particle which, besides many other meanings, is used in exclamation of wonder (Steingass).

إيلاف (attachment) is inf. noun from الف (alafa). They say الفه *i.e.*, he made him to cleave or keep to the place; he made him love him or it; he made him stick to it; he made a covenant with him for the purpose of trade, he traded with him; he provided him with necessary things and prepared him. إيلاف means, sticking or making one stick to a thing; loving and making one love a person or thing; providing a person with a thing; a covenant or an obligation involving responsibility for safety; protection (Lane & Aqrab).

قرش (the Quraish) is derived from قرش. They say قرشه *i.e.*, he collected it from here and there and attached one part of it to another. (Aqrab). The Quraish were so called because one of their ancestors Quṣṣayy bin Kilāb bin Naḍr had prevailed upon them to migrate from all parts of Arabia where they had lived a scattered life, and to settle in Mecca. Of Banū Kananah only the progeny of Naḍr settled in Mecca and as they (Quraish) were a small group, they were called قرش which means, a small group gathered from here and there.

Commentary :

See next verse.

4847. Commentary :

As ل is a particle and in Arabic a new sentence never begins with a particle, a sentence or clause or expression therefore must be taken as understood before the words لا يلف قريش as before بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ the word أقرأ (I read) or أشرع (I begin) is taken to be understood. In the present case the understood expression, according to some Commentators, is اعجب يا محمد and the verse is supposed to read something like this : اعجب يا محمد لنعم الله على قريش في إيلافهم رحلة الشتاء والصيف *i.e.*, do thou wonder O Muḥammad at God's great favour upon the Quraish that He has created in their hearts love for journeying in winter and summer. The Divine favour consisted in the fact that by taking trade caravans in winter to Yemen and in summer to Syria and Palestine, the Quraish brought necessities of life to Mecca. By this trading activity, they developed a certain prestige and also became acquainted with the prophecies about the appearance of a great Prophet in Arabia by coming into contact with Jews of Yemen and Christians of Syria who knew those prophecies.

4. They should worship the Lord of this House,^a

5. Who has fed them against hunger, and has given them security against fear.⁴⁸⁴⁸

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ ۝

الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ ۝

^{a3} : 97; 27 : 92.

It was indeed a great Divine favour that God created in the hearts of the Quraish a liking, for making journeys to Yemen and Syria. They were so rooted in the soil and had such great attachment for the Ka'ba that they would rather starve than leave it, even temporarily. It was by the exhortation of Hāshim, the Holy Prophet's great grandfather, that they took to this calling. Thus it constituted a great Divine favour upon the Quraish that by their journeys to these places they, besides other advantages of these journeys, were being prepared to accept the coming Prophet when he appeared.

Apart from the expression اعجب يا محمد لنعم الله taken as understood, there is another explanation of the verses which fits in, perhaps more appropriately, with the context. This is as follows: "Thy Lord destroyed the Owner of the Elephant to attach the hearts of the Quraish to their journeying freely in winter and summer, which constituted a great Divine favour upon them." This because if Abraha had not been destroyed it would have been impossible

for the Quraish to make journeys to Yemen. The destruction of Abraha thus besides opening the way for trade-journeys to Yemen, made the Ka'ba all the more sacred in the eyes of the Arabs for whom it was already a place of pilgrimage. This in its turn gave added impetus to the trade of the Quraish.

4848. Commentary :

It was indeed a great Divine favour that as servants of the Ka'ba the Quraish were granted perfect security from fear, while all around them raged fear and insecurity. Besides, they were provided round the year, with every kind of fruit and food. All this was not due to mere chance. It was in pursuance of a Divine Plan and in fulfilment of a prophecy made by the Patriarch Abraham 2500 years before (14 : 36, 38 & 2 : 127, 130).

The verse drives home to the disbelieving Quraish their guilt of ingratitude by telling them that they had taken to the worship of gods made of wood and stone.

CHAPTER 107

SŪRA AL-MĀ'ŪN

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

This *Sūra*, like the one preceding it, is among those revealed very early at Mecca. It takes its title from the word الماعون with which it ends.

In the preceding *Sūra* the Quraish were told that God had granted them peace and security from danger, and had provided them with all necessities of life purely out of His Grace and Mercy and not due to any effort on their part or because they deserved all these favours. They were warned, therefore, that as an act of gratitude they should have rendered sincere and devoted service to their Gracious Maker. But they became engrossed in the pursuit of worldly affairs and took to idol-worship. In this *Sūra* it is stated that love of the world causes nations to lose faith in the Hereafter and to consign God to oblivion. The *Sūra* deals with two basic principles of Islam, whose neglect constitutes denial of Religion itself. These are worship of God and service of fellow human beings.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Hast thou seen him who denies the Judgment^{b 4849}

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ ②

3. That is the one who drives away the orphan.⁴⁸⁵⁰

فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ ③

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b82 : 10.

4849. Important Words :

الدين (the Judgment) is inf. noun from دان which means, he obeyed. دين means : (1) requital or recompense; (2) obedience; (3) judgment or reckoning; (4) ascendancy or predominance; (5) mastery or rule; (6) plan; (7) prayer; (8) religious organisation; (9) righteousness; (10) state or condition; (11) Divine decree; (12) habit or custom; (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In view of the different meanings of دين the verse may signify: He is indeed a very bad man (1) who has no faith in Divine reckoning; (2) who disobeys and defies the organisation of the Community to which he belongs; (3) who does not believe that good prevails over evil in the long run; (4) who does not believe in خلافة على منهاج النبوة i.e., *khilāfāt* on the pattern of prophethood; (5) who does not believe in Religion which is the source and basis of all morals; (6) who does not give up evil ways and does not lead a righteous life (7) one with whom the doing of good does not become a habit; (8) who does not conform his conduct to the Divine decree i.e., does not develop in him Divine attributes ; (9) who does

not worship God with true and sincere devotion; and (10) who has no plan in life i.e., who despairs of his future. Thus the word الدين includes in its signification all those things, violation of which results in complete moral ruin of individuals and nations.

4850. Important Words :

يدع (drives away). دعه means, he pushed him away; thrust him away or drove him away; or he repelled him or he did so harshly, roughly or violently. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

In the preceding verse we were told that denial of Religion opens the way to all manner of evil. This and the next verse speak of two most deadly ills of society, which, if not scrupulously guarded against, bring about decline and disintegration of a community. The failure to take proper care of the orphans kills in a people the spirit of sacrifice; neglect of the poor and the needy deprives a useful section of the community of all initiative and the will to improve their lot. These two verses represent one of the two basic principles of Islam i.e., service of humanity (شفقة على خلق الله).

4. And urges not the feeding of the poor^a.

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْيَسْكِينِ ۝

5. So woe to those who Pray.⁴⁸⁵¹

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ۝

6. But are unmindful of their Prayer.⁴⁸⁵²

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ۝

7. They like *only* to be seen of men^b.⁴⁸⁵³

الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ ۝

8. And withhold *legal* alms^c.⁴⁸⁵⁴

وَيَسْتَعُونَ الْبَاعُونَ ۝

^a69 : 35; 74 : 45; 89 : 19. ^b4 : 143. ^c4 : 54.

4851. Commentary :

Prayer represents the duties and obligations we owe to God. They are called حقوق الله (obligations due to God) in religious terminology. The verse purports to say that the Prayers of those hypocritical pharisees who do not discharge the obligations they owe to God's creatures are a body without soul, a shell without substance. All their actions are hypocritical which, instead of doing them any good, add to their hypocrisy and insincerity.

4852. Commentary :

The المصلين (worshippers) of the preceding verse have been condemned here as unmindful of

their Prayers, since their Prayers fail to bring about in them moral change which Prayers are intended to create and develop.

4853. Commentary :

The hypocritical pharisees make only a show of soul-less acts of goodness and charity.

4854. Important Words :

معن (legal alms) is derived from معن and means, rain-water; small household articles of common use such as axe, cooking pot, etc; good; an act of kindness, any useful thing; obedience; *Zakāt* (Aqrah).

CHAPTER 108

SŪRA AL-KAUTHAR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction

Being one of the earliest revelations this *Sūra* constitutes a strong proof of the Qur'ān being the revealed Word of God, and of the serial arrangement of the *Sūrās* having been adopted under Divine direction, for, while the *Sūra* was revealed very early at Mecca, some time in the first four years of the Call, it has been placed almost at the end of the Holy Book. The order in which the Qur'ān exists today is different from the order in which it was revealed. It is indeed a miracle of the Qur'ān that the order in which the various *Sūrās* were revealed was best suited to the needs of the period during which they were revealed, but they were arranged as its component parts in the order which was best suited for the needs of all human beings for all time to come. The promise contained in the *Sūra* was made at a time when the Holy Prophet was hardly known outside Mecca and his claim that he was the last Deliverer of humanity was looked upon by his compatriots as unworthy of serious consideration. The promise is in emphatic and certain terms. The words, "We have given thee abundance of good," show that the promised good has already been given to the Prophet. It was in the fitness of things that in order to prove the Divine origin of the *Sūra* it should have been revealed at a time when, humanly speaking, there was hardly any possibility of fulfilment of the promise and that it should have been placed at the end of the Qur'ān when the promise had already been fulfilled.

The connection of the *Sūra* with its predecessor consists in the fact that whereas in the preceding *Sūra* four prominent moral sins of the hypocrites and of Muslims of weak faith were mentioned, in the *Sūra* under comment the corresponding four virtues of the righteous believers have been referred to, viz., generosity, regularity in saying daily Prayers, devotion to God, and willingness to make sacrifices for national causes.



1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Surely, We have given thee^b abundance of good;⁴⁸⁵⁵

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ②

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b93 : 6.

4855. Important Words :

الكوثر (abundance of good) is derived from كثر which means, it was or became much, copious, abundant, many, numerous, great in number or quantity; it multiplied or accumulated. كوثر means, abundance of good; a lord or master abounding in good; a man possessing good or much good, and one who gives much and often. According to some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet it is a certain river in Paradise, from which flow all other rivers. It is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey and has its margin composed of pavilions of hallowed pearls. (Lane, Aqrab, Mufradāt and Jarīr).

Commentary :

The *Sūra* refers to the Holy Prophet as one on whom abundant good has been bestowed. It was revealed at a time when the Prophet had nothing to give. He was living the life of a poor man and his claim to prophethood was looked upon with contempt and as unworthy of serious consideration. For years after the *Sūra* had been revealed he was mocked and jeered at, opposed and persecuted and at last had to leave his native town as a fugitive, a price having been laid on his head. For several years at Medina, too, his life was in constant peril and Islam was eagerly expected (and humanly speaking justifiably) by its enemies to come to an early and tragic end. Then towards the end of his

life abundance of good in every shape and form began to pour down upon him like a cataract, and the promise contained in the *Sūra* was literally fulfilled. The "outlaw" of Mecca became the arbiter of the destinies of the whole of Arabia, and the unlettered son of the desert proved to be the eternal Teacher of all mankind. God gave him a Book which is humanity's infallible guide for all time to come. He imbibed and manifested in his person Divine attributes and rose to such high degree of nearness to his Creator as is possible for any human being to attain. He was blessed with a company of devoted followers whose loyalty and devotion has never been equalled, and when the call came to him from his Creator to leave the world he was satisfied that he had fully discharged the sacred task entrusted to him. In short, all kinds of good, material and moral, were bestowed upon the Holy Prophet in full measure. He, therefore, eminently deserved the title, "the most successful of all Prophets" (Enc. Brit.).

The word كوثر also signifies, a man possessing much good and one who gives much and often (Lane). The Holy Prophet was given الكوثر in this sense also, because God raised among his followers a galaxy of Divinely-inspired Reformers who successfully defended him and Islam in every age and guided and led the erring Muslims to the right path. Haḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, Founder

3. So pray to thy Lord, and offer sacrifice.⁴⁸⁵⁶

4. Surely, it is thy enemy who is without issue^a.⁴⁸⁵⁷

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

^a111 : 2.

of the Ahmadiyya Movement, was the most distinguished of these Reformers. He distributed most lavishly the treasures of Divine wealth given to him by God, thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Holy Prophet about the Promised Messiah and Mahdi viz., يفيض المال حتى لا يقبله أحد (Bukhārī) i.e., he will spend spiritual wealth so lavishly that there will be none left to accept it. So the Promised Messiah may be الكوثر referred to in this verse.

4856. Commentary :

The verse enjoins the Holy Prophet to turn to God with utmost devotion and be prepared to undergo all manner of sacrifice for the achievement of his great goal—the attainment of الكوثر.

4857. Important Words :

الابتَر (one without issue) is derived from بتر which means, he cut off or cut off utterly or entirely. أبتَره means, he cut off his tail. أبتَر means, any beast having the tail cut off; a short-tailed serpent; one in want or poor; defective, deficient, imperfect; suffering loss; from whom all good or prosperity is cut off; having no offspring or no male issue (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

It is very significant that in this verse enemies of the Holy Prophet have been emphatically referred to as ابتَر i. e., having no male issue;

while the historical fact is that all the sons of the Holy Prophet himself born before and after the revelation of this Sūra died and he left no male issue after him. This shows that “ابتَر” mentioned in the verse only means, one deprived of spiritual issues and not of sons commonly so called. In fact, it was God’s own design that the Holy Prophet should leave no male issue as he was destined to be the spiritual father of a multitude of sons in all ages to the end of time, sons who were to be far more faithful, obedient and loving than the sons of any father. He was not only the spiritual father of the Faithful but in a sense the father also of all the Prophets of God before and after him. This is the significance of the verse مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ i.e., Muhammad is not (and will not be) the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; (33:41). And this also seems to be the significance of the verse النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ i.e., the Prophet is nearer to the believers than their own selves and his wives are as mothers to them (33 : 7). Thus, it was not the Holy Prophet but his enemies who died issueless, since by joining the fold of Islam their sons became the spiritual issues of the Holy Prophet, who felt a sense of shame and humiliation at their pedigree being attributed to their own fathers.

The verse may also signify: “Surely, it is thy enemy who is cut off from all good or prosperity.”

CHAPTER 109

SŪRA AL-KĀFIRŪN

(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation, and Context :

It is generally agreed that this *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca. Ḥasan, 'Ikrama and Ibn Mas'ūd are of this opinion. Ibn Mas'ūd being one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet, his opinion about the date of revelation of a particular *Sūra* naturally carries great weight. Noldeke places this Chapter in the beginning of the fourth year of the Call. This fact, incidentally, belies the baseless accusation of some Christian hostile critics of Islam that the Holy Prophet had agreed to make a compromise with idolatry at the time of revelation of Chapter 53, which by common consent was revealed in the fifth year of the Call, as in the *Sūra* under comment which was revealed only one year before the supposed compromise with idolatry in every shape or form has been emphatically rejected.

Subject-Matter

The subject-matter of the *Sūra* has a deep connection with that of the *Sūra* preceding it. No two *Sūrās*, perhaps, are so intimately connected with each other as these are. The subject dealt with in the opening verses of the *Sūra* inevitably flows from, and is the direct result of, the subject treated in *Sūra* Al-Kauthar. In *Sūra* Al-Kauthar it was stated that spiritual and material blessings will be bestowed upon the Holy Prophet such as have no parallel or precedent in human history. As a new Adam, he will be the progenitor of a new world, and his progeny alone will continue to prosper. In the *Sūra* under comment those disbelievers against whom a Divine decree had gone forth that they will not accept Islam are admonished that if having seen manifest Signs in support of the Holy Prophet they refused to accept him, how could they expect Muslims to give up their Faith and accept their foolish and fantastic doctrines? If disbelievers entertained any such hope they were mistaken. The only reasonable course left to them was to wait for God's judgment to come into operation.

In view of the importance of the subject-matter of the *Sūra* the Holy Prophet enjoined its frequent recital. He is reported to have said that *Sūra* Ikhlāṣ was equal to 1/3 of the Qur'ān, the present *Sūra* to 1/4 of it, and whosoever would frequently recite these two *Sūras* and deliberate over their subject-matter would command great respect and prestige, (Ibn Marduwaih), meaning, that as *Sūra* Ikhlāṣ, deals with a basic principle of Islam—Divine Unity—and as in the present *Sūra* believers are enjoined courageously to stick to their Faith, in an hostile environment or under adverse circumstances, he who will comprehend and realize the significance and importance of these *Sūras* will necessarily command great respect.

سُورَةُ الْكَافِرُونَ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٩)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. Say, 'O ye disbelievers! 4858

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ②

3. 'I worship not as you worship'; 4859

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ③

4. 'Nor do you worship as I worship,

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ④

5. 'And I shall not worship that which you worship;

وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ ⑤

6. 'Nor will you worship Him Whom I worship.

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ⑥

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b10 : 105; 39 : 15-16.

4858. Commentary :

The Divine command expressed by قل (say) applies, besides the Holy Prophet, to every Muslim. Besides the present *Sūra*, this word is placed at the beginning of Chapters 72, 112, 113 and 114, and is used in about 306 verses of the Qur'ān, and wherever it is used it emphasizes the importance of the subject governed by it. Thus believers are enjoined to proclaim loudly and repeatedly, and to convey to disbelievers in clear and definite terms, the great principles of Islam enunciated and emphasized in the present *Sūra*.

The use of ايتها (O ye) is intended to draw pointed attention to the subject-matter of the *Sūra* and to emphasize its importance. The expression has frequently been used in the Qur'ān to serve this purpose.

The word الكافرون (the disbelievers) has a general application, or it may refer to those confirmed disbelievers who by their persistent

and defiant rejection of Truth rule out all possibility of accepting it and disbelief becomes, as it were, a part of their being.

4859. Commentary :

Various explanations have been given to the present and the next three verses by Commentators. Some say that as the pagan Meccans had put their question in two forms, therefore two forms have been adopted in answer to their question. Others say that the repetition is for the sake of emphasis. Yet some others like Zaijāj are of the opinion that the first two sentences signify denial of worship in the present time and the last two sentences denial of it in future. As against this Zamakhsharī says that the first two sentences stand for denial of worship in future while the last two for that in the past. Be that as it may, when لا (no, not) governs مضارع, it signifies future tense. According to this use of the particle the expression لا أعبد would mean: "I will never worship."

7. 'For you your religion, and for me my religion'.⁴⁸⁶⁰

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ۝

^{b2} : 140; 10 : 42.

Moreover, particle **لَا** is used in two ways; as **مصدرية** transforming into infinitive the verb which it governs, and as **موصولة** meaning **الذي** i.e., "that which." Sometimes it is also used for rational beings and means **من** i.e., "he who." According to the various uses of the particle the verses would mean: I will not adopt your way of worship, or, I will not worship those that you worship, whether rational beings or irrational inanimate things. But the verses have a better and more appropriate translation if **لَا** is taken as **مصدرية** in the former two verses and as **موصولة** in the latter two. Thus, the four verses would be interpreted something like this: "I will never adopt your mode or

manner of worship, nor will you adopt the manner in which I worship. And I shall not worship those things (idols) or rational or irrational beings whom you worship, nor will you worship Him Whom I worship."

4860. For different meanings of **دين** see 107 : 2. According to these the verse signifies : "As there is absolutely no meeting ground between your way of life and mine and as we are in complete disagreement not only with regard to the basic concepts of religion but also with regard to its details and other aspects, therefore, there can possibly be no compromise between us.

CHAPTER 110

SŪRA AL-NAṢR

(Revealed at Mecca after Hijra)

Introduction :

This is a Medinite *Sūra* in the sense that it was revealed after Hijra in the Medinite period, but is a Meccan *Sūra* in the sense that it was revealed at Mecca on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage, only about 70 or 80 days before the Holy Prophet's death. All relevant historical data, coupled with reliable traditions and supported by such eminent authority as 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, one of the very early and distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet, have assigned this date to its revelation. This was the last whole *Sūra* to be revealed, though the last verse with which the Quranic revelation came to an end was the 4th verse of *Sūra* Al-Mā'idah, viz: "This day have those who disbelieve despaired of harming your religion. So fear them not, but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion." In the preceding *Sūra* disbelievers were plainly told that as their outlook on life, their ideals and principles, their religious practices and mode and manner of worship were quite different from those of believers, there was no possibility of a compromise between the two. They shall reap the consequences of their deeds while the Muslims will enjoy the fruits of their labour. In the present *Sūra* believers are told that the victory promised to them has already come and people have joined the fold of Islam in large numbers. Therefore, they, particularly the Holy Prophet,—should give thanks to his Lord, extol His praises and seek protection from Him against shortcomings and moral weaknesses that generally find their way into a new Movement at a time when large groups of people join its fold, because, in view of a vast number of new converts and owing to lack of adequate number of experienced teachers to teach them the essentials of the new Movement, they fail to comprehend and assimilate properly its teaching or imbibe its spirit.

سُورَةُ النَّصْرِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (110)

1. ^aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

2. When the help of Allah comes, and the victory,⁴⁸⁶¹

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ②

3. And thou seest men entering the religion of Allah in troops,

وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ③

4. ^bGlorify thy Lord, with His praise, and seek forgiveness of Him. Surely, He is Oft-Returning with compassion.⁴⁸⁶²

يُغْفِرُ فَيَسْجُدُ لِمَوْلَاكَ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرُكَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ④

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b15 : 99; 20 : 131; 50 : 40.

4861. Commentary :

الفتح means, the promised victory.

4862. Commentary :

The Holy Prophet is here enjoined that since God's promise has been fulfilled and large masses of people have begun to enter the fold of Islam, he should give thanks to his Lord for fulfilling His promise about victory, sing His praises and seek His protection and forgiveness.

The expression استغفره has a very wide significance. The Holy Prophet is here told that since victory has come to him and Islam has become predominant in the land and his erstwhile enemies have become his devoted servants, he should ask God to forgive them the grave wrongs they had done to him in the past. This seems to be the meaning and significance of the injunction to the Holy Prophet to seek God's forgiveness. Or the Holy Prophet might have been enjoined to ask God's protection against weaknesses and shortcomings that might find their way into the Muslim Community on account of lack of adequate training or education for the new converts. It is significant that

whenever mention is made in the Qur'ān of a destined victory or some great success falling to the Holy Prophet, he is generally told to ask God's forgiveness and to seek His protection. This clearly shows that he is enjoined here to ask for God's forgiveness and to seek His protection not for himself but for others; he is asked to pray that whenever there was any danger of his followers deviating from Islamic principles or precepts, God may save them from such a crisis. Thus there is no question here of the Prophet's asking forgiveness for any of his own actions. According to the Qur'ān, he enjoyed complete immunity from every moral lapse or deviation from the right course (53 : 3). For a detailed treatment, however, of the word استغفار see 40 : 56 & 48 : 3.

The expression, "He is Oft-Returning with compassion," holds a message of hope to the Holy Prophet. He is told that whenever there was any danger of his followers deviating from the path of Islam and falling victims to moral decay on a large scale, God will return to them with compassion and will raise from among them a Reformer who will lead them to the right path.

CHAPTER 111

SŪRA AL-LAHAB

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks:

There is complete unanimity of opinion among Muslim scholars and Commentators, that this *Sūrā* was revealed at Mecca during the early years of the Call. Noldeke and Muir also subscribe to this view. Some scholars, however, are of the opinion that the *Sūra* was the fifth to be revealed, the four *Sūrās*—‘Alaq, Nūn, Muzzammil and Muddaththir, preceding it. The *Sūra* seems to deal with people having red-faces and fiery tempers; hence its title.

In *Sūra* Al-Kauthar the Holy Prophet was given a two-fold promise about the great and rapid increase of his following and about the failure of the machinations of his enemies against Islam. In the preceding *Sūra*—Al-Naṣr—reference was made to the first part of the promise; the present *Sūra* refers to its second part.

سُورَةُ الْاَلْهَبِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (111)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. ^bPerish the two hands of Abū Lahab, and perish he! ⁴⁸⁶³

3. ^cHis wealth and what he has earned shall avail him not. ⁴⁸⁶⁴

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ ۝۱

تَبَّتْ يَدَا اَبِيْ لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ۝۲

مَا اَغْنٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ۝۳

^aSee 1 : 1. ^b108 : 4. ^c3 : 11; 58 : 18.

4863. Important Words :

يدان (two hands), is the dual form of يد which among other things means, power, influence; assistance, help, protection; troops, host, army; possession; wealth. (Lane). See also 5 : 65, & 38 : 46.

تب (perish) means, he suffered loss; he became lost; he perished; he died. تيب, تباب and تب (tabbun) are all infinitive nouns meaning, loss; death; destruction; perdition. They say تبالة *i.e.*, may he perish; may perdition be his lot. تبتيده also means, may he perish (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

ابولهب (Father of Flame) was the nickname of 'Abd al-'Uzzā, the Holy Prophet's uncle and his inveterate enemy and persecutor. He was so called either because his complexion and hair were ruddy or because he had a fiery temper. The *Sūra* recalls an incident during the early preachings of the Holy Prophet. On being informed by God to call together his relatives and to deliver to them the Divine Message the Holy Prophet stood on mount Ṣafā and called the different Meccan tribes by name—the tribes of Lawwī, Murra, Kilāb and Quṣṣayī, and his near relatives, and told them that he was God's Messenger, and that if they did not accept his Message and did not give up their evil ways, Divine punishment would overtake them. The Holy Prophet had hardly finished his speech, when Abū Lahab

stood up and said. تَبَا لَكَ اَلْهٰذَا جَمَعْتَنَا هٰذَا الْيَوْمَ *i.e.*, ruin seize thee, is it for this that thou hast called us together (Bukhārī).

The sobriquet "Father of Flame" may either refer to the Holy Prophet's uncle or to any hot tempered enemy of Islam or better still it may apply to Western Powers of the Latter Days who own and control atomic and nuclear weapons—one group of them repudiating God altogether, and the other denying His Unity but both being equally opposed to Islam. In this sense "the two hands" would signify these two groups.

The verse purports to say that all endeavours and machinations of the enemies of Islam, particularly of the two groups of Western Powers and their satellites, would utterly fail and all their nefarious designs would recoil on their own heads; they would burn with rage at seeing Islam progressing, and their own wealth, power and possessions (أيد) perishing before their very eyes.

4864. Commentary :

This verse appropriately may also apply to the wealthy Western Powers who have great material resources at their disposal. The words "his wealth" may mean the wealth produced in their own countries, and "what he has earned" may signify the riches they have earned by exploiting weaker nations and despoiling them of their natural resources.

4. Soon shall he burn in a flaming fire; ⁴⁸⁶⁵

سَيَصْلَى نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ۝٤

5. And his wife the carrier of the firewood. ^{4865-A}

وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ۝٥

6. Round her neck shall be a halter of twisted palm-fibre. ⁴⁸⁶⁶

عَنْقُورٌ فِي حَبْلِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ ۝٦

4865. Commentary :

The expression *أبُولَهَب* may also mean, one who invents something which produces fire and flames, or one who is himself consumed in the flames of fire. In this sense, the verse may be interpreted as predicting the destruction of the two major political Blocs of the Latter Days by their own fire-producing weapons, such as atom bombs and other nuclear weapons. The verse also shows that the day of reckoning for these nations is not far off. It seems to have already arrived.

4865-A. Important Words :

حطب (the carrier of firewood). *حطب* is inf. noun from *حطَب* (*ḥaṭaba*) which means, he collected firewood, *حطبه* means, he slandered him. They say *هو يحمل الحطب* *بين الناس* i.e., he goes about spreading calumny or slander among the people (Lane & Aqrab).

أمرأته (his wife) is syn. with *زوج* which among other things means, an associate, a comrade, wife (Lane).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse seems to be to Abū Lahab's wife, Umm Jamīl who strewed the Holy Prophet's path with thorns and went about spreading calumnies against him. The verse may also apply to people in Western Democracies or in the Communist Bloc who spread calumnies and false accusations against Islam and urge their leaders to break its power.

The verse may also signify that these nations would be constantly engaged in manufacturing weapons for their own destruction.

4866. Commentary :

Though apparently free, these nations will be so strongly tied to their respective political ideologies and systems that they will not be able to break away from them. Or like Umm Jamīl who is said to have become strangled by the very rope by which she carried fire-wood, these nations would perish by the very means by which they would seek to destroy others.

As a fitting postscript to the *Sūra* two of the prophecies, one from the Qur'ān and the other from the Bible which speak of the terrible fate of these nations may be given below:

But when the promise of My Lord shall come to pass, He will break it into pieces. And the promise of my Lord is certainly true. And on that day We shall leave some of them to surge against others and the trumpet will be blown. Then shall We gather them all together. And on that day We shall present Hell, face to face, to disbelievers (18 : 99-101).

And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that My fury shall come up in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath have I spoken. Surely, in

that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel. So the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be

thrown down, and the steep places shall fall and every wall shall fall to the ground....And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood: and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands and upon the many people that are with him an overflowing rain, and great pestilence, fire and brimstone (Ezek. 38 : 18—22).

CHAPTER 112

SŪRA AL-IKHLĀS

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

That this is one of the earliest Meccan *Sūrās* is the view of Ḥasan, 'Ikrama and, above all, Ibn Mas'ūd, one of the earliest of the Holy Prophet's Companions. But, Ibn 'Abbās, though much younger than 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd but regarded as one of the most learned Companions, thinks that the *Sūra* was revealed at Medina. In view of these conflicting opinions of these two very respected Companions of the Holy Prophet some Commentators of the Qur'ān are inclined to think that the *Sūra* was revealed twice, first at Mecca and then at Medina. Among Orientalists, Muir places it among the earliest Meccan *Sūrās*, while Noldeke assigns it to the end of the first period—about the fourth year of the Call.

In view of the importance of its subject-matter, the *Sūra* has come to be known by several names, of which some are: Al-Tafrīd; Al-Tajrīd; Al-Tauḥīd, Al-Ikhlāṣ; Al-Ma'rifah; AL-Ṣamad; Al-Asās; Al-Nūr, etc.

Because it deals with the basic religious belief—Unity of God—the *Sūra* has the distinction of being called by the Holy Prophet as the greatest of all the Quranic *Sūrās* (Ma'ānī). 'Ā'isha is reported to have said that before going to bed the Holy Prophet used to recite this and the last two *Sūrās*, at least thrice (Abū-Dāwūd). The *Sūra* is entitled Ikhḷāṣ because its recitation and deliberation over its subject-matter, is calculated to foster in the reader a deep attachment to God.

What adds to the great importance of the *Sūra* is the fact that while Al-Fātiḥah is considered to be a resume of the whole of the Qur'ān, the present *Sūra*, together with the two succeeding it repeats and rehearses the theme of the subject-matter of Al-Fātiḥah.



1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Say, 'He is Allah, the "One and only",⁴⁸⁶⁷

3. 'Allah, the Independent and Besought of all.⁴⁸⁶⁸

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ②

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ③

16 : 23; 22 : 35; 59 : 23.

4867. Commentary :

The word قل (say) here embodies a permanent command to all Muslims to keep proclaiming "God is One."

هو (He) used as ضمير الشأن and meaning, "the truth is," signifies that the truth is embedded in human nature that God is and that He is One and Alone.

الله is the distinctive name used for the Supreme Being in the Qur'an. In the Arabic language the word is never used for any other thing or being. It is a personal name of God, neither attributive nor descriptive. See also 1 : 1.

أحد (the One) is an epithet applied to God alone and signifies, the One; the Sole; He Who has been and will ever be One and Alone; Who has no second to share in His Lordship, nor in His Essence (Lane).

According to Aqrab the difference between أحد and واحد when used about God is that whereas أحد signifies Oneness of God in His Person, the idea of a second being inconceivable, واحد signifies uniqueness of God in His attributes.

Commentary :

In view of the above-mentioned significa-

tion of واحد and أحد the expression الله واحد would signify that God is that Supreme Being Who is the Source and Fountain-Head from Whom all creation has emanated; and الله أحد would mean that Allah is that Being Who is One and Alone in the sense that when we think of Him, the very idea that there is any other being or thing is absent from our minds. He is One and Alone in every sense. He is neither the starting link of any chain, nor its last link. Nothing is like Him nor is He like anything else. This is Allah as conceived and presented by the Qur'an.

4868. Important Words :

الصمد (Independent and Besought of all) is substantive noun from صمد. They say صمد الله في الحوائج i.e., he betook himself or had recourse to Allah in needs and exigencies. صمد (samad) means, a person to whom one betakes oneself in one's needs. سيد صمد means, a chief to whom recourse is had; a lord to whom obedience is rendered; without whom no affair is accomplished. صمد also means, a person or place above whom or which there is no one. الصمد means, the Supreme Being to Whom recourse is had for the accomplishment of needs; Who is Independent of all and upon Whom all depend for their needs: Who will continue for ever after all creation has ceased to exist; above Whom there is no one. (Lane & Aqrab).

4. 'He begets not,^a nor is He begotten';⁴⁸⁶⁹

لَمْ يَلِدْهُ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝

5. 'And there is none like unto Him'.⁴⁸⁷⁰

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

^a17 : 112; 19 : 93; 25 : 3; 37 : 153.

Commentary :

In the preceding verse the claim was made that God is One, Alone, and Unique. The present verse substantiates that claim. It says that God is الصمد *i.e.*, all things and beings depend upon Him and He is Independent and Besought of all. All have need of Him and He has need of none. He needed the help of no being or material to create the universe. So when all things and beings are dependent on Him and to Him we have recourse for our needs and requirements and He fulfils them, then where is the necessity of any other God?

In fact, nothing in the universe is complete in itself, not even the smallest atom. Nothing is self-subsisting; everything depends on some other thing for its existence. God alone is such a Being Who depends on no being or thing. He is above conception and conjecture. His attributes know no bound or limit. This is the meaning of الصمد

4869. Commentary :

The Divine attribute الصمد (Independent and Besought of all) was mentioned in the previous verse to establish the claim that Allah is احد (One, Alone, the Unique), and now in the verse under comment the Divine attribute يلد لم يولد (He begets not, nor is He begotten) is mentioned to show that He is الصمد *i.e.*, God is above need, because the presence of need presupposes that He requires the assistance of someone without whom He cannot carry on His work, and who should continue His work, after He is

dead, inasmuch as all those beings that succeed, or are succeeded by others, are subject to death, but those things which need no successor and do not die before fulfilling the object of their creation, such as the sun, the moon, the oceans, the mountains, etc., are not subject to death or destruction. Thus Allah Who has succeeded no one and will be succeeded by no one is complete in all His attributes and is Eternal, Everlasting and Absolute.

4870. Commentary :

This verse disposes of a possible doubt that the previous verses might have created : Granted that Allah is One, Alone, Absolute and Independent of all and that He neither begets nor is He begotten, but there might be in existence another being who, like Him, might also possess all the attributes He possesses. The verse effectively removes this misgiving. It says that there is none like Allah. Human reason demands, and the Qur'ān has conceded the reasonableness of this demand, that there should be One Creator and Controller of the whole universe. The perfect order that pervades and permeates it leads to the inevitable result that one uniform law must govern it, and the unity and uniformity of the law and the design proves and proclaims the unity of its Maker (21 : 23). Thus the *Sūra* cuts at the root of all polytheistic beliefs that exist in one form or other in other Faiths—belief in two, three or more gods, or the belief that soul and matter or any other thing co-exists with Allah.

God, as conceived and held out by Islam, is a personal God and not a mere philosophical conception; One, Alone, Unique, Eternal and Absolute, without beginning or end, Incomparable, above the need of being succeeded by any one, nor ever having succeeded any one.

This is the sublime definition of the Supreme Being as given in the Qur'ān ; and nothing in any other revealed Scripture touches even the fringes of the beauty, sublimity and majesty of this definition.

CHAPTER 113

SŪRA AL-FALAQ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation, and Context

This and the next *Sūra* are so closely linked as regards their subject-matter that though they are complete in themselves and independent of each other, the *Sūra* that follows viz., Al-Nās, may be regarded as complementary to the present *Sūra*. This *Sūra* deals with one aspect of the same subject while the next *Sūra* deals with the other. Both the *Sūrās* together are called *Mu'awwidhatān* meaning, "the two *Sūrās* that afford protection," because both of them open with the expression "I seek refuge in the Lord."

There is a wide divergence of opinion among scholars regarding the place where these *Sūrās* were revealed. In view of this divergence it is rather difficult to determine the exact date of their revelation. Some scholars, including Ibn 'Abbās and Qatādah, assign them to Medina while according to Ḥasan, 'Ikrima, 'Aṭṭā' and Jābir, they were revealed at Mecca. Among Western scholars Noldeke and Muir hold no definite opinion, but Weil thinks that they belong to Mecca. Taking all relevant facts and historical data into consideration, the majority of Muslim scholars and Commentators of the Qur'ān are inclined to place them among the Meccan *Sūrās*. The present *Sūra* is entitled Al-Falaq (the Dawn).

Subject-Matter

The connection of these two *Sūrās* with *Sūra* Al-Ikhlāṣ consists in the fact that in that *Sūra* believers were enjoined to proclaim to the whole world that God is One and Unique, that He is far above anything or any person being a partner in His Divinity. In these two *Sūrās* the believers are told that they should not be afraid of any tyrant, dictator or ruler in the discharge of this sacred duty and should hold the firm belief that God is the sole Director and Controller of the whole universe and that He has the power to protect His votaries from any harm or injury which the forces of darkness might seek to do them.

Though constituting an integral part of the Qur'ān, these two *Sūrās* may be regarded as forming a sort of epilogue to it. The main body of the Qur'ān seems to end with *Sūra* Al-Ikhlāṣ, which recapitulates, as it were, in a nutshell, the basic Quranic principles, and in these two *Sūrās* believers are enjoined to seek Divine protection against deviating from the right path and against the mischiefs and evils which might adversely affect their material well-being and spiritual development. The Holy Prophet used to recite these two *Sūrās* regularly before going to bed.

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn',⁴⁸⁷¹

3. 'From the evil of that which He has created,

4. 'And from the evil of darkness when it overspreads'.⁴⁸⁷²

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ②

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ③

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ④

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b6 : 96.

4871. Important Words :

الفلق (dawn) is subs. noun from فلق . They say فلق الصبح i.e., He (God) made the dawn to break. 'Ali, the Holy Prophet's Fourth Successor used generally to swear by the words والذي فلق الحبة وبراؤ النسيمة i.e., By Him Who clove the grain, making it to germinate and Who created man or the soul. فلق , among other things means, the daybreak or dawn; the whole creation; Hell; the plain appearance of the truth after it had been dubious; a low or depressed place of the earth between two hills; an elevated ground (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary :

A believer is enjoined to invoke the protection of God, the Lord of فلق . In view of different meanings of the word, he is told to pray :

- (1) That when the night of darkness over Islam has passed away and the morning of its bright future dawns, its sun should continue to shine till it reaches the Meridian.
- (2) That God might protect him from the hidden and manifest evil of all that He has created, including the evils of heredity, bad environment, defective

education or other corrupting influences.

- (3) That God should save him from the torments of Hell in this life and in the Hereafter.
- (4) That God should enable him to avoid extremes and to adopt the middle course in all things which is the safest course, since the idea implied in ربوبية is development by degrees and in stages. See also v. 6 below.

4872. Important Words :

غسق (darkness) is derived from غسق which means, it became dark or intensely dark. غسقت العين means, the eyes flowed with water. غسق اللبن means, the milk poured fourth from the udder. الغاسق means, the night; darkness; the Pleiades when it sets; the moon when it is eclipsed; the sun when it sets; the day when it enters upon the night, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

وقب الظلام (overspreads). They say وقبت الشمس i.e., the darkness overspread. وقب الرجل means, the sun set. وقب القمر means, the eyes of the man sank. وقب القمر means, the moon became eclipsed (Aqrab).

Commentary :

The verse may refer to the evils of the time when the light of truth becomes extinguished

5. 'And from the evil of those who blow upon the knots of mutual relationships to undo them,'⁴⁸⁷³

وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ۝

6. 'And from the evil of the envier when he envies.'⁴⁸⁷⁴

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ۝

and the darkness of sin and iniquity spreads over the entire face of the earth. Or it may refer to the evils of the time when one is overwhelmed by distress and privation, when it is darkness all around him, and the last ray of hope disappears. See also last verse of the *Sūra*.

4873. Important Words :

النفاثات (who blow) is derived from نفث which means, he spat. نفثت الحية الدم means, the serpent emitted poison. نفث الله الشيء means, God inspired him with a thing. نفاثات means; those groups that spit or emit much poison; those who whisper evil suggestions (Aqrah).

Commentary :

The reference in the verse is to those whisperers of evil suggestions who cause solemn contracts and friendships to break down, and who inspire people with a spirit of defiance of established authority or with violating the oath of fealty, and thus seek to create discord and dissension in the Muslim Community and to encourage fissiparous tendencies among them. For a detailed note on the whole *Sūra* see next verse.

4874. Commentary :

The *Sūra* deals with the material side of man's life as does the next *Sūra* with its spiritual side. Man is confronted with various kinds of dangers and difficulties in life. When

he is engaged in an undertaking of a serious import, particularly when he takes upon himself to spread the light of Truth, forces of darkness surround him on all sides; and when he proceeds further men of evil designs bar his way and create all sorts of impediments and difficulties. When at last success dawns on him, persons of a jealous nature seek to deprive him of the fruit of his labour. As protection against all these difficulties, obstacles and perils in life, a believer is enjoined to invoke the help and assistance of the Lord of نفث (dawn) to give him light when there is darkness all around; to protect him from the evil designs of mischief-makers and the nefarious machinations of jealous persons. What a complete and comprehensive prayer!

The last two *Sūrās* of the Qur'ān may also specially refer to the time of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī. Verse 4 of the present *Sūra* may refer to the eclipse of the sun and the moon which, according to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet was to take place in the time of the Mahdī (Qutnī), and the last two verses may refer to his enemies who will create all sorts of difficulties for him and will burn with rage as they will see his mission making rapid progress.

حاسد (the envious one) may also refer to the *Dajjāl*, the Arch Envier who will give the Promised Mahdī an obstinate fight.

CHAPTER 114

SŪRA AL-NĀS

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introduction :

This *Sūra*, the second of the *Mu'awwidhatān*, constitutes an extension of its predecessor and is in a way complementary to it, in that in *Sūra Al-Falaq* the believers were enjoined to seek protection from God against the hardships and privations of life, in the present *Sūra* protection is sought from trials and tribulations that hamper man's spiritual development, and the protection is to be invoked not only by verbal solicitation but by deeds and actions that may attract God's Grace. This is the true significance of the commandment conveyed by the word قل (say). The *Sūra* is quite fittingly entitled الناس (mankind), since protection has been solicited from the Lord, King and God of mankind (الناس) against the mischief of whisperers from among Jinn and men, who whisper evil thoughts into the hearts of men (الناس). The *Sūra* was evidently revealed at the same time as *Sūra Al-Falaq*, both the *Sūras* constituting an appropriate ending of the Qur'ān.

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١١٤)

1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,⁴⁸⁷⁵
3. 'The 'King of mankind,
4. 'The God of mankind,
5. 'From the evil of the whisperings of the sneaking whisperer.
6. 'Who whispers into the hearts of men,

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①
 قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ②
 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ③
 إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ④
 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ⑤
 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ⑥

^aSee 1 : 1.

^b59 : 24; 62 : 2.

4875. Commentary :

In the present *Sūra* three Divine attributes viz., رب الناس (Lord of mankind), ملك الناس (King of mankind), اله الناس (God of mankind), have been invoked as against one attribute, viz., رب الفلق (Lord of the dawn) in the preceding *Sūra*, because this one attribute comprises all the three above-mentioned attributes. Whereas One Divine attribute, viz., رب الفلق (Lord of the dawn) has been invoked against four kinds of mischief in the previous *Sūra*, in the *Sūra* under comment three Divine attributes have been invoked against one mischief i.e., whispering of the Evil One. This is because promptings or insinuations of Satan cover all conceivable evils.

Mention of three Divine attributes in the *Sūra* implies that all sin proceeds from three

causes, viz., when a person looks upon other men as his رب (Lord) or ملك (King), or اله (God), that is to say, he regards them as the main prop or support of his life or slavishly surrenders to their undue authority or makes them the object of his love and adoration. A believer is enjoined here to look up to God alone as the real support of his life, and to render Him alone true and unconditional obedience and to make Him alone the real object of his love and adoration. Or, the believer may have been enjoined in these verses constantly to seek protection against the ravages of exploiting capitalists, tyrannical rulers and from the crafty priestly class who, taking undue advantage of the unwary and simple-minded folk exploit them mercilessly. The reference seems particularly to be to the conditions obtaining in the Latter Days.

7. 'From among Jinn and men.'⁴⁸⁷⁶

مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ۝

4876. Commentary :

The verse may mean that the Evil One whispers evil thoughts into the hearts of *Jinn* (big men) and common men, sparing nobody.

Or it may mean that whisperers of evil are to be found both among *Jinn* and common men. The verse may also refer to the evils of Western Democracies and of the Communist Powers that work from behind the iron curtain.